

A CHRISTIAN MENTORING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO ADDRESS THE
PROBLEMS AND NEEDS OF A TARGET GROUP OF 20 GIRLS AT BUTLER
MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND THE COMMUNITY OF
WILLIAMSBRIDGE

By

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of the Butler mentoring program is to provide intervention for young females so that they may discern their true identity, develop skills, ascertain a clearer picture of career goals and process their feelings so that they can cope with some of the concerns and problems that they face today; peer pressure, self esteem, dissatisfied school grades, fear of teen pregnancy, parental involvement and many others.

It is the hope of the church that the Christian education provided will bring about a spiritual revolution among all of our youth where the forces of the secular world cannot penetrate. Until this happens we are committed to provide the extended educational resources that will help our youth in everyday living.

We know that childhood and adolescence are crucial stages in their development. Some of our children are from healthy environments and don't experience conflicts as others, whose problems are severe enough to impede their development as well as their ability to find a place in society. We want all of our youth to experience a healthy successful life so that they can achieve all of their potential.

The lack of youth centers in the Williamsbridge community is an attributing factor to our problem. Mentoring is the intervention initiative that was devised to implement for the girls of the Williamsbridge community.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE SETTING

Butler Memorial United Methodist Church

Butler Church was founded in 1912. The name “Butler” was given in memory of the late Rev. William P. Butler, first minister of St. Mark’s United Methodist Church in Manhattan. Initially, the church was comprised of American Blacks that moved to the Bronx from the South. In 1942, Rev. William P. Johnson, who retired in 1974, was appointed the pastor. His faithfulness to the ministry was profoundly seen as he extended himself to the utmost in his giving to the children of Butler Church and the community. Many parishioners speak about his true faithfulness by not accepting a salary for his pastoral commitment.

As the membership increased, there was limited space for church school so an expansion program was formulated. On May 20, 1961, a groundbreaking ceremony was held.

Around 1971 many Caribbean people joined the church and today the population is about 99% Caribbean. Rev. Granville Forde became the new pastor, accompanied by his wife and daughter. He drew a large audience of people from the various islands of the West Indies and the membership continued to flourish.

In the fall of 1981, Butler began to have two services, the first at 8 A.M. and another at 11 A.M. The average attendance for each service is 300-350 people. Each Sunday, classes were and are still held from 9:30 A.M.-10:30 A.M. Additionally, a

Wednesday Morning Bible Study class was started, and continues today.

Rev. Forde retired in June 1998 and Butler received a new pastor, the Rev. Noel N. Chin, former pastor of Calvary United Methodist Church, accompanied by his wife and three children.

In July 1998, the church purchased a parsonage in Mt. Vernon, New York and a property at 1021 East 223 Street for our new educational building. The church also purchased a van for the first time. Rev. Chin also appointed several lay speakers. I, among others, was appointed to this position. Rev. Chin served Butler for five years and was later appointed District Superintendent of the Metropolitan North District on July 1, 2003.

Rev. St. Clair Samuel was appointed pastor of Butler on July 1, 2003, accompanied by his wife and son. Under his leadership we are experiencing renewed spiritual growth and great leadership. Viewing the church today we realize that the church has changed in many respects. This can be seen from an interview with one of the senior members, Mr. Fitsroy Cargill. He stated:

I was born in Barnes Oriente, Cuba but grew up in Jamaica, West Indies. I remember Butler being a very small church and the parishioners were always very spiritual and closely knitted together. Love was always the dominant force that kept people together. The extended family had a great impact upon the rearing of children. Children were more obedient to parents and there were better parent/child relationships. Youth were not involved with drugs and gangs as they are today. Today the extended family is almost obsolete. We are dealing with a mechanical world, but we need spirituality. The economic situation of life in the past was somewhat the same as today, but people gave cheerfully without any dictates. The youth today need to listen more attentively to their parents, teachers, and pastors to guide them in order to achieve better lives and the teachers need to be complimented and everyone owes so much to them for the great efforts that they contribute in the teaching of our children. Butler Church should be more concerned about positive parent and child relationships. Many years ago the church was a safe place. As a sexton, I

remember hiding the keys on the outside in a specific place, no one ever found them and there was never a burglary.¹

Butler is a United Methodist Church under the New York Annual Conference, Metropolitan North District. It has the largest membership in the district. We have a purpose statement, which was developed by some of the leaders in June 1992.

Butler Memorial United Methodist Church Purpose Statement

God has called us to be a holy people and to bear fruits in due season. To this end, we the pastor, officers and members of the Butler Memorial United Methodist Church see our purpose as a church: To live lives worthy of the gospel, thereby promoting Christian living, to live in love and fellowship with each other, and to enlighten each other spiritually.²

Our foundation is based on preaching, teaching, worshipping and praying. Butler Church is a very active church with its own individual activities and also with other connectional churches at the District level. We are very involved in Evangelism and participate in all areas dealing with outreach to the community and the connectional communities abroad.

There are many clubs and organizations at our church that have different functions that contribute to the successful operation of the church. The Lay Leader, Building Fund, Church Council, Staff/Pastor Parish Relations, Education Mission, Evangelism Mission, Scholarship Fund, United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women, Youth Council, Young Adult Ministries, Committee on Lay Leadership, Disciple Bible Study, Anniversary Council, Church and Society, Nurses Unit, Spirit 'N' Black Choir, Inspirational Choir, Chancel Choir, Inter-religious Concerns and Church School are some of the operational organizations. All of these organizations make up the

¹ Fitsroy Cargill, interview by author, Bronx, New York, September 12, 2007.

² "The Purpose Statement," *The Charge Conference Journal*, Butler Memorial United Methodist Church (2007).

spiritual realm and operation of Butler Church.

The Spirit 'N' Black Choir began in the 70's for youth ages 13-18. There was however, a great split in our youth ministry around 1998 when the director of the youth choirs left the church and became a director at another church. He was liked by many of the youth, impacted the youth ministry tremendously and many of them followed him and never returned. This circumstance affected the youth ministry for a short spell, but the youth continued to join and participate in the choir and today we have two large children choirs. A general tendency observed among the teens at Butler Church is that after graduation, many relocated to other communities and only returned for visitations.

We are thankful for the vision of Mr. Roy Pickering who started the Friday Night Ministry in 1981. During an interview with him, he stated:

I was inspired to start a youth ministry after speaking to some of the ladies who originally came from some of the islands in the West Indies. They indicated that when they were kids in the islands, they always had a youth ministry and they knew that Butler needed one also. I planned and coordinated the first meeting in 1981, which consisted of 46 young people from the church and the community. Approximately 30 of those youth were non-members. They have some of the same problems of today's youth; drug use, gang involvement, sexual activity, teen pregnancy, low self-esteem and parental misunderstanding. I supervised this ministry through informal forums and have sponsored trips to parks many times. I am very aware and concerned about the problems of our youth.³

Mr. Pickering has resigned from this position and now the Youth Council supervises the ministry. The Youth Council of Butler Church is the umbrella for our youth and we are indeed thankful for them and all who contribute towards this ministry. The Youth Council was established in 1999 as a mandate by the New York Annual Conference and our Youth Council presides over the entire youth population. Many

³ Roy Pickering, interview by author, Bronx, New York, September 12, 2007.

youth from the community who are not members have always been a part of Butler's congregation and continue to be involved. We are concerned about the entire community of Williamsbridge and its youth. Today, our greatest focus is on what intervention and resources we can provide our youth in a church setting.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Williamsbridge is a fast developing area in the eastern portion of the borough of the Bronx, New York. The neighborhood was historically Jewish and Italian-American; however, during the 1970's it became populated with Africans from the diaspora. From the 1980's on it received an influx of Caribbean people (Jamaicans, Haitians, and Trinidadians). There has been a migration of African-Americans out of the community to other areas and the Latino-American population in the community has grown with the increased development of multi-family dwellings in the area. The community remains predominantly Caribbean (Jamaicans, Haitians, and Trinidadians) and Latino. It is a striving community of working class people who have families.

Overcrowding in the schools of Williamsbridge is a big concern and as a result of this problem, two new schools have been erected: P.S. /M.S. #189 and M.S. #362. Law enforcement in the schools is a part of the everyday discipline to maintain order.

Presently housing is a very distinct problem in the Williamsbridge community. Developers buy every lot and space in the neighborhood and sell the homes for exorbitant prices making it very difficult for people to purchase homes.

Crime, illegal drugs and the presence of loiterers are very pervasive in the neighborhood and negatively impact the neighborhood but the health and safety of our children continue to be a top notch priority for all of us including the Community Board #12. Our Community Board continues to advocate for the establishment of youth recreation centers and focus on all aspects of intervention that will promote enhancement for the lives of our children.

Unfortunately, there are no organized youth activities in the Williamsbridge area

exclusively for our girls. There are however, many sports and athletic activities for the young boys. There are several leagues in the Pelham and Fordham areas available for the boys including baseball, basketball and football.

The New York Public Library (Allerton and Fordham branches) offers games and gaming, videos and other similar activities weekly for youngsters between the ages of 8-16. The parents informed me that they were aware of the many activities provided by the Library including the Little League sports but they never encouraged or helped their children in taking advantage of these opportunities. A few said that they would now consider exposing their kids to these activities because they would benefit their children. It is very clearly seen that the Kingsbridge area does have some recreational resources for the youth but it lacks a great amount of importantly needed resources for our youth and particularly our young females. While there are some important activities for the boys, there are none for the girls. This is definitely a systemic problem that we need to address with our Assemblyman, Councilman and Senators.

FOCUS SITUATION

Butler Church has always had a great interest and concern for the youth in the community. The youth of Butler are one of our most treasured groups, because we know that they must be nurtured and cared for, for they will be the young men and women that will carry on the church of God into the future. Our youth actually became visible in the formation of the congregation with the Junior Youth Choir, which was started in the late 70's. The development of youth ministry actually began with this choir and in 1984 the choir's name changed to the W.P. Johnson Choir. Because of the tremendous dedication and work provided by Rev. W.P. Johnson, the leaders felt that this choir should be named after him. The age range of this choir is 5-12.

It is our prayer that the Christian education we provide will bring about a spiritual revolution among all of our youth, where the forces of the secular world cannot penetrate. Until this happens, we are committed to provide the extended educational resources that will help our youth in everyday living.

We know that childhood and adolescence are crucial stages in a person's development. Some of our children are from healthy environments and don't experience the same conflicts as others, whose problems are severe enough to impede their development as well as their ability to find a place in society. We want all of our youth to experience a healthy, successful life so that they can achieve all of their potentials.

THE PROBLEM

The Church does not have the resources and space to effectively help our youth in a church setting. The lack of youth centers in the community is a great contributing factor to our problem. To access youth centers in other neighborhoods, one must travel by car or public transportation outside of their community. Many of our youth have expressed to the council workers that they don't want to attend centers in other neighborhoods, because they don't want to socialize with kids that are not in their neighborhood. This is a systemic issue that we have addressed with Councilman Larry Seabrook of the Bronx, New York, repeatedly and he is continuously advocating for funding to build community centers in the Williamsbridge area but it has not materialized.

We are excited to see a new pivotal move in our church. The church is strategically moving towards youth intervention. This can clearly be seen with the incorporation of the Timothy Men project, a Rite of Passage for young men. Elizabeth Abel was the coordinator and a Youth Council member, who returned to Butler Church after military duties and completion of her educational goals.

She reaffirmed her position with the Council and through her vision and efforts the project was implemented. Mr. Shawn Walker assisted her in the full operation of the project, which lasted for 9 months. The project's goal was to provide 20 young men with an educational journey into manhood. It was meant to transition these young men into roles of communal participation, spiritual growth, and leadership and also as an invitation for these young men to experience spiritual growth by learning from the life experience of matured men that are exploring their own life decisions. The coordinator reported that

many of these young men are now participating in the Friday Night Ministry and in more communal activities.

We have addressed some of the issues of the young men, and now we want to address the concerns and problems of our young females. The young females, parents, the pastor, our Youth Council, and leaders are greatly concerned about the lack of a program to address the needs of our young females. Does the church care about the young females? This is the question that is consistently being asked by the young females and parents since the Timothy Men project. Yes, our church loves all of our youth, boys and girls and we must assure the entire congregation that Christ's love extends to all, which we want to demonstrate through a development of a strong initiative for our young females.

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the efforts of our denominational head in their efforts with our youth concerns, The New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The Conference conducts an annual conference where youth are engaged in group activities with the purpose of keeping them connected to the church. The teens from Butler Church have attended these kinds of conferences at Hofstra University and also in North Carolina. The Conference also sponsors what is called a "Journey of Discovery and Shalom" where youth and adults have journeyed to the former Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and many other countries, and now Cuba. The Conference speaks of how these times of sharing and discussion have been the high point of each experience for the youth. Butler Church is eagerly looking forward to having our youth represented in the Journey of Discovery trip.

While we are grateful to the Conference for all of their efforts in the development

of our youth, we are convinced that each United Methodist church in the district needs a strong ongoing youth intervention program of its own so their youth can explore who they are, who God is calling them to be, and benefit from ongoing intervention programs, educational seminars and workshops that can help them develop the skills to cope with their problems.

We are sincerely grateful to our Youth Council, which continues to make concerted efforts in their work with the youth at Butler Church and the community. Our Friday Night ministry is coordinated by Ms. Wendy Holness, accompanied by Mr. William Bellajambe and several other Council workers. Our church ministers to approximately 200 young people. On Friday night the Youth Council coordinates a session that welcomes an average of approximately 40 youth with the age range of 12-16. The Council conducts group discussions on topics of youth concerns like peer pressure, self-esteem, teen pregnancy, drug/ gang involvement, sex, school grades, teachers, law enforcement, crimes, police profiling, harassment, bullying and parental conflicts. They believe that the rap sessions are productive because they allow the youth to express feelings and share experiences, but some of the youth are quiet and give impressions of being uncomfortable in discussions on some of the topics. As stated earlier, we are convinced that our youth at Butler Church need more extensive professional intervention so that they will not just talk about the issues but also learn how to deal with their problems.

The Coordinator and another Council worker, former youth Coordinators, Roy Pickering and Elaine Baptiste, have worked with these teens for many years. They have stated all of the identified problems of Butler's youth which are affirmed by our youth:

abuse, family conflicts, gang recruitment, recruitment to sell drugs, experimental sexual activity, peer pressure, teen pregnancy, drug use, questions regarding Christianity/ faith/ spirituality, educational problems, legal problems, bullying, harassment, and police profiling. The Council stated that this is based on what the youth have shared with them throughout the years through group discussions at Friday Night Ministry and also through individual dialogues with council members.

Looking deeper at the problems our youth face, we wanted an updated report from the youth, so we allowed them to tell us through the completion of a survey questionnaire. Two questionnaires were completed: one directed to youth (boys and girls), the second directed exclusively to girls. The findings from a sample of 21 youth indicated that 76% of the youth are facing peer pressure, 100% indicated that they want non-parental involvement in activities at the church, and 100% acknowledged that they are aware of and are impacted by some of the problems like drugs, gang involvement, and teen pregnancy. The questionnaire directed exclusively to 12 females indicated several distinct problems experienced by young women: 100% of them face peer pressure, 50% have problems with school work, 50% face low self-esteem, 50 % have the fear of teen pregnancy, 41% indicated that they get along well with their parents, 59% indicated that they don't get along with parents, 100% indicated that they don't want parental involvement with any activities at the church.

Based on consistent reported information that the youth have imparted to the Youth Council workers in conjunction with the questionnaire findings, we see an inordinate amount of problems that our youth face. Findings from the young females showed abnormally high levels of problems such as peer pressure, low self esteem, poor

parental involvement, school work, and fear of teen pregnancy and these problems as explained more in depth below are the ones we want to address as we begin our work with our young females.

We have information from our females through verbal and documented survey questionnaires of their problems. There was an urgent need to embark on an initiative for the young females, because their problems will not disappear if not addressed and our females must not be precluded from the blessings of God. Christ loves all children and we are all concerned about the problems our young females face and we want to fulfill the will of Christ. Further, Butler Church does not want false beliefs planted in the minds of the females, parents and the congregation that the church is not concerned about the needs of our young females. The young female population of Butler Church is now our focus group of concentration.

WHAT THE FEMALES SAY ABOUT THEIR PROBLEMS

The Council members stated that Friday night sessions allow the youngsters to voice their opinions even when the discussions become confrontational. The Council members say that the situations the teens speak out about to their peers during Friday night sessions are as follows: The females say low self-esteem is a problem that they experience. Some say they sometimes don't feel love from others (friends and peers) as they would like, and most of them say they feel that they are not doing enough to please their parents. Most say they sometimes just don't feel like they can meet the expectations of their parents. A few of them have said that they wished they were smarter and often they just don't feel good about themselves, and they all believe these things contribute to them having low self-esteem. With respect to self-esteem, Ginny Olson in her book, *Teenage Girls*, states:

Sometimes, when a girl is dissatisfied with her identity or low self – esteem, she'll seek to hide her true self behind a mask of a false self. She may wear the mask of "perfection", striving to perform at unrealistic levels in all that she does, the essay must be flawless, the speech must get an A, the competition must be won, or the room must be spotless, anything less than perfect means she's to blame. She forgets that no one is perfect, and that God loves her for who she is, not for what she does.⁴

Based on information and many studies conducted on self-esteem, particularly among young females, we see how important it is that parents, teachers, peers, and people overall play a role in establishing healthy self-esteem in the lives of young females. Henceforth we want to employ the things that are needed to help these females become surrounded with positive messages about themselves to sustain a more balanced life. We want to make a concerted effort in addressing the problem, so these females will be able

⁴ Ginny Olson, *Teenage Girls* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1996), 27.

to appreciate their own worth, and take pride in their abilities, skills, and accomplishments.

Regarding teen pregnancy, the Council members stated that the females are somewhat silent about discussions about sex and sometimes appear uncomfortable during the discussions, but some of the females say pregnancy is something that they never want to happen to them. They spoke more readily about sexual diseases. All of those ages 14-16 say they have heard something about sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) and AIDS and they understand them to be passed from one person to another during sexual relationships. They say that they do not know much about the HIV /AIDS virus other than that they hear people, including young people, are dying often from the disease. They say they hear information about these kinds of topics from other peers but minimal information is coming from their parents.

Black Women's Health reports:

Teenagers (ages 13-19 years) in the United States are engaging in sexual activity in increasing numbers. Some children, even younger than 13 years of age are having sex. The high rate of adolescent pregnancy is a national concern. The African-American community has been and continues to be greatly impacted by the consequences of high rates of teen sexual activity and pregnancy. It is our responsibility to love, nurture and educate our youth so that they can make responsible choices with regard to their sexual behavior.⁵

We are greatly concerned and are committed to ensure that our females are informed with the correct and accurate information on teen pregnancy and sexuality. We are also willing to take proactive steps in pursuing all efforts to help our young females to see their goals and dreams come to fruition.

⁵ David Pryor, "Teenage Sex and Pregnancy," Black Women's Health, <http://www.blackwomenshealth.com/2006/articles.php?id=91> (accessed January 29, 2008).

We must exhaust all of the resources available to bring awareness to these young females and families on preventative measures of teen pregnancy. When 13% of our young females in the United States are forced to become mothers before they are really mature enough to understand the reality and challenges of motherhood, they will have more unnecessary stress and unhappiness. With the proper education our females will have the knowledge and understanding to make the right choices concerning life's circumstances.

According to the Council members, peer pressure is also another topic that the females talk about more readily. The majority of them say they are definitely impacted by other peers. One of the issues the girls talk about in rap sessions is their inability to get along with other girls. They state that other girls are sometimes jealous of each other if they are more popular, especially if boys pay more attention to them than other girls. Some of the females (ages 14-16) say they sometimes are tempted and follow other girls in doing certain things like fighting because it makes them feel like they are brave and courageous. They admitted that they sometimes follow their friends in special gatherings after school that they know their parents would not approve of.

On the topic of peer pressure, Aspen reports:

Much research has shown that peer pressure has a much greater impact on adolescent behavior than any other factor. Because they spend much more time with their peers than with family members, peer pressure seems to have more impact upon children with low self-esteem, so if a child feels compelled to fit in, he or she may do things that go against his or her beliefs just to be a part of the group. Peer pressure may lead to experimentation with drugs, alcohol, skipping school, and various high-risk behaviors. Parents who spend less time with their children have to set clear expectations for their behavior, establish rules about communicating where and with whom their teenagers are spending their time and should

pre-set consequences for lying about activities or where they are going.⁶

The studies and findings lucidly show that peer pressure is strong and can impact the lives of our young people positively and negatively. It can influence positive and negative behaviors in life's circumstances. It is imperative that we provide our youngsters with the information they need to give them confidence while making vital decisions in their life. Again, education is the important strategy that must be reinforced for vital, positive effects.

On the topics of school, grades and teachers, the Council members say the females also readily talk about them. Over half of the females report that schoolwork is a challenge and they often have a difficult time getting the grades they want or that their parents desire. Some say they are dissatisfied with their grades mostly because they know that they are not meeting the expectations of their parents. They say they want to satisfy themselves also but they are tired of being stressed out with school work and trying to cope with other issues. Some say that teachers don't care at all, are unprofessional, and provoke them on purpose. They acknowledge that some are smart and know how to teach, but also feel that they can't deal with behavioral issues, don't want to hear excuses about schoolwork, and only want the work done. Some views about teens and school behaviors as reported by Focus Adolescent Services indicate that many teens experience a time when keeping up with schoolwork is difficult. These periods may last several weeks and may include social problems as well as a slide in academic performance. Research suggests that problems are more likely to occur during a transitional year, such as moving from elementary to middle school, or middle school to

⁶ Aspen Education Group, "Peer Pressure," Aspen Education Group, <http://www.aspeneducation.com/factsheetpeerpressure.html> (accessed January 29, 2008).

high school.⁷

Identifying adolescents who are at risk for failure is important. We feel that education is one of the most important elements in the lives of our young people. Parents, teachers, mentors and others in the community must participate in the education of our children. Working parents are tired at the end of a long day and may not have time to give the quality time to help their children with school work or to even engage in a parent/child conversation.

With respect to parental involvement, the Council reports that the females emphatically voice their opinion that they do not want their parents to participate in any church activities with them or any other outside activities; however, they don't give a reason. They all laugh amongst themselves on this topic.

The first lady of the United States, Laura Bush, responded to a letter I wrote after discovering that she had a great youth intervention program. Her discussion on the topic of parental involvement was poignant. Mrs. Bush said:

Parents and family are the first and most important influence in every child's life, providing a foundation of love and support. By becoming actively involved in the lives of young people in their community grandparents, teachers, mentors, clergy members, neighbors, coaches, and other community members can support parents and help youth become community assets, making better choices that lead to healthier, more successful lives.⁸

Also, Wesley Carr in the *Dictionary of Pastoral Studies* says:

The church is spoken of as a family and where this is genuinely so, it can be very caring and supportive. However, it will be essential for the church as a whole to comprehend parenting is not something that can wisely be left to the mere instincts of parents, but needs knowledge, skill and the devoted support of the

⁷ Focus Adolescent Services, "Behavior Problems and Behavioral Disorders," Focus Adolescent Services, <http://www.focusas.com/BehaviorProblems.html> (accessed January 29, 2008).

⁸ Laura Bush to the author, September 17, 2007.

whole community.⁹

We believe that parents play the key role in their children lives. They must be involved with their children everywhere, for it shows that they are interested, love and care for them. We believe that parent/child, church and other involvement can help our young females in eliminating and coping better with their problems. This is a problem at Butler that urgently needs to be addressed, so we will continue to encourage parent/children involvement at Butler Church by inviting parents to all youth events and especially to all of the monthly activities of the mentoring program, so verbal dialogues may have a positive impact.

The entire leadership body of the church agrees that we cannot be cavalier about the needs of our young females. The church will establish and sustain a strong youth program for all of the youth and presently, our focus group is our young females. It is the mission of our church to always have our youth as an integral part of the church and to minister to them in the most significant way through Christian education. We believe in the religious upbringing of our youth and this is affirmed by others.

All elements in a child's life, his character, sense of responsibility, good and bad habits, ability to cope with difficulties, and his piety are shaped by religious upbringing. Children are extraordinarily receptive to religious impressions. Young people need to be included in the life of the church, and not separated into their own group, if we want them to be involved in the life of the congregation when they become adults. Take this away from him and his soul will become dulled and he will feel lonely in an unfriendly and

⁹Wesley Carr, *The Dictionary of Pastoral Studies* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), 250.

cruel world.¹⁰

The decision to implement an initiative for our young females was agreed upon by the site team. It was unanimously agreed that since we have implemented a youth initiative for the young men, it is imperative that we do the same for the young females, because they too, have deep-seated problems that need to be addressed.

We believe that the mentoring program is the best program for our young females. Our view can be supported by the president of the Johnnetta B. Cole Global Diversity and Inclusion Institute at Bennett College for Women, Bea U. Perdue, who stated in the Weekly Special Report:

Part of the problem is that many young female women of color do not have access to women who look like them, who are successful in church, government and industry. Their studies and goals were to show girls how to attain the skills they will need to be successful rather than just telling them what to do. Students meet women in government, and career sessions introduce them to successful women in an array of jobs with local and national companies. These girls have to be reached early on and made aware of the possibilities while encouraging them to make their own personal growth and education a priority.¹¹

We want to utilize this concept in our initiative. We also like the concept of mentoring as reflected in David A. Stoddard's book, *The Heart of Mentoring*. He states:

Mentoring helps partners to determine their priorities, uncover their

¹⁰ Bishop Alexander Mileant, "The Religious Upbringing of Children," The Religious Upbringing of Children, <http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/child.htm> (accessed November 11,2007).

¹¹ Carolee Walker, "Mentoring Helps Girls Succeed in Careers, Life," Embassy of the United States, Addis Ababa Weekly Special Report, <http://addisababa.usembassy.gov/uploads/images/gjS96W4uomJqWnZpd7nFzw/weekly031507.pdf> (accessed November 30,2007).

passions, and honestly address their pain, it concentrates on the need of the mentored, not on the agenda of the mentor, it focuses on changing people from the inside out, not the outside in, and it involves the spiritual side of a person, not just the physical, mental, and emotional aspects.¹²

We wanted to expeditiously implement the mentoring project for our young females. We proved that this mentoring project addressed their needs and problems and caused transformation in their lives. We were intentional in our quest to recruit Christian women who are enthusiastic, passionate and willing to spend several months in this mentoring project, people who love the Lord and people who have experience, knowledge, skills and time to spend several months in this effort and who were willing to use a Christian-centered approach.

Not only did we believe that this project would cause a transformation in the lives of our girls, but we believed that this intervention would become an ongoing practice of our church and other connectional churches. Our wish came to reality.

¹² David A. Stoddard and Robert J. Tamsay, *The Heart of Mentoring* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Navpress, 2003), 8.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGE

The mission of Butler Church has always been to achieve the maximum benefits for youth. One of our greatest goals is to utilize all resources that can erase or minimize the problems of our young females so that they can transition into becoming successful women in the world. We love our youth and are committed to support them in all areas of their lives and spiritual growth. The church is committed to continuously provide Christian education and to nurture them with all of the love that we can. Our greatest concern is to utilize all of the resources that can be provided in a church setting to impact the lives of these young females. As leaders we knew that a strong youth initiative was greatly needed in the development process of our females and we believe that the church should be deliberate in the challenge of supporting this mentoring project.

It was unanimously articulated that the problems of our young females are pervasive and need to be addressed. The problems of our young females have been an issue that has never been addressed as an initiative. There was a definite urgency as was reflected by the findings from the comments of our young females. The Site Team and candidate moved forward with implementing this youth intervention project for the congregation and community of Williamsbridge.

We partnered with the Mentoring Partnership of New York, an affiliate of Mentor National Mentoring Partnership, Inc. that has a brand network of more than 100 mentoring programs throughout New York City. The Mentoring Partnership of New

York provided us with public awareness, resource development, advocacy, training, technical assistance and directions on data collection and evaluation for the mentoring program. The Mentoring Partnership of New York is a high-quality training agency for the development of mentoring programs and opportunities. They generated greater visibility for Butler Mentoring program and granted us access to the latest information on the national level. We are also now on the CAYM website. We are being contacted by interested persons who want to become volunteers for the Christian mentoring program.

I concentrated on implementing a youth intervention program to address problems faced by young females at the church. The site team and I accepted the challenge and moved forward in seeing it come to fruition.

CHALLENGE STATEMENT

At Butler Memorial United Methodist Church, young females between the ages of 12-16 have problems with peer pressure, school grades, low self-esteem, parental/child involvement, and fear of teen pregnancy. A mentoring project will be implemented to help them establish trusting relationships, develop the skills and motivation necessary to deal with their problems, and encourage them to pursue higher educational goals.

CHAPTER 3

PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

Goal #1

To raise awareness among the congregation of the continuous need for youth intervention programs to address the needs of young females.

Objective: Implement a program so that the congregation will be educated on how our young females have deep-seated problems such as peer pressure, low self-esteem, fear of teen pregnancy, school grades, and parental/child involvement that need to be addressed.

Strategy #1

From March 2008 through May 30, 2008, I will have the female lay speakers of Butler Church (certified speakers of the New York Annual Conference) and other women speakers deliver sermons on the mentoring bond of women and men seen in Biblical Scriptures such as the story of Naomi, who was a mentor to Ruth, Paul as mentor to Timothy and the many accounts of Jesus Christ who continues as a mentor to all humankind. I will preach the initial sermon.

Evaluation of Strategy #1

After each sermon, the Site Team and I will interview 10% of the parishioners (adults and young females) to ascertain their perception of mentoring. I will ask questions like: Was the sermon's connection to mentoring apparent? What are their feelings about the program being implemented at Butler Church? I will record their responses verbatim in a journal of all interviews. If 20% of the parishioners respond

positively, I know that I have met program goals. This activity begins April 2008.

Strategy #2

I will have symbols, pictures and literature of female and male mentors printed on the Sunday worship bulletins from March through December 2008. This activity begins March 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #2

The Site Team and I will speak to 10% of the parishioners and young females about their feelings concerning the mentoring symbols, pictures and other literature on the Sunday worship bulletins. We will ask them to rate the images in the bulletins: 5=greatly impressed, 4=impressed, 3=looks good, 2=not impressed and 1=don't know what to think. If half of them rate the images at 3, 4, or 5 then we know that we have met program goals. This will be done in March-December 2008.

Strategy #3

I will host a special program in May 2008 for the mentors, mentees, and parents. It will be an informal gathering, and the congregation will also be invited. A video from Mentoring Partnership of New York will be shown on the significance of the mentoring program to young females.

Evaluation of Strategy #3

I will speak to all participants to ascertain their response and reaction to the program, and document their responses verbatim. I will also ask everyone to complete an evaluation form. Some of the Site Team will assist me with this task. This will be done in May 2008.

Goal #2

To recruit and train program mentors, members of the Core Team, Youth Council and Ad Hoc Committee to ensure that everyone understands the dynamics and importance of the goals of the mentoring program. This will be done in March 2008.

Objective: We will have trained mentors, and members of the Core Team, Youth Council and Ad Hoc Committees so that we have an established mentoring program that will meet the needs and problems of our young females.

Strategy #1

The Site Team and I will select the Core Team from among the members of the Youth Council and volunteers from our congregation and abroad. The Core Team will act as an advisory group and will function with the Site Team as an oversight committee to assist in the successful operation of the mentoring program.

Evaluation of Strategy #1

The Site Team and I will review the information supplied on the data sheet. We will select 6-7 people who meet the criteria. This will be done in May 2008.

Strategy #2

To recruit and select the target group of 20 candidates for mentors based on recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee, Core Team and Site Team. The Site Team will establish the interview process and schedule the interviews for mentors who will participate. Mentors will be invited for interviews on specified dates. The Site Team will interview mentors. This will be done in April 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #2

The Ad Hoc Committee, Core Team, Site Team and I will select a mentor based

on the best interests of the mentee and whether they have the skills to match the program's needs. This will be done in April 2008.

Strategy #3

All staff participants and mentors will be trained by the New York Mentoring Partnership at the site. This will be done in April 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #3

The Site Team, Core Team and I will schedule them for training. All of them will have a training manual and will be ready to participate in the mentoring program. This will be done in April 2008.

Strategy #4

Orientation of trained mentors will be conducted which will allow them to meet all of the program personnel, as well as other prospective mentors so that they can begin informal support of each other.

Evaluation of Strategy #4

The Site Team and I will determine through interviews that the mentors selected have gained an adequate understanding of the program objectives from the orientation. This will allow us to make a final decision on whether these mentors will participate in the program. This will be done in April 2008.

Goal #3

To implement an effective and successful Mentoring project at Butler Church.

Objective: The Mentoring is operational at Butler Church that brings about transformation in the lives of young females.

Strategy #1

To develop a program budget if needed and determine the amount of funding needed to start. Any determined budget will be forwarded to the Church Council for approval. This will be done in May 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #1

The Site Team and I will make a decision on any financial request. We will review any planned expenditures to establish a financial budget for this mentoring program. This will be done in May 2008.

Strategy #2

To recruit and select a target group of 20 mentees based on recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee, Core Team and Site Team. The Core Team will establish the interview process and set up interviews for the prospective candidates. Mentees will be invited for interviews on specified dates. Mentees will be selected based on their interests, needs, commitment to the program goals and ability to meet guidelines. This will be done in April 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #2

The Ad Hoc Committee, Core Team, Site Team and I will select 20 mentees that meet our criteria through interviews. -This determination will be based on: their interest, commitment to being consistent in their participation in the program, willingness to

discuss new ideas, and their desire to affect change in their lives. This will be done in April 2008.

Strategy #3

To have all mentees trained by New York Mentoring Partnership at the site on the designated date.

Evaluation of Strategy #3

The Ad Hoc Committee, Core Team, Site Team and I will decide whether the training provided by New York Mentoring Partnership has been effective through interviews with the mentees. This determination will be based on: the mentees' interest in the topics discussed, relevance to the struggles encountered by the mentees, and their enjoyment of the process. This will be done in April 2008.

Strategy #4

Conduct interviews with the mentees and parents/caregivers to determine if the program is appropriate to their needs and to sign consent and agreement forms.

Evaluation of Strategy #4

The Site Team and I will interview mentees and parents to determine whether parents and children fully understand the mentoring program and are ready to move forward with operation.

Strategy #5

To match mentors and mentees based on compatibility factors supplied on applications and data sheet of mentee. Matches will be based on the standardized guidelines of the Mentoring Partnership of New York: similar interests both the mentor and the mentee share; i.e. hobbies, lifestyle and family makeup, personality and behavior

Styles such as: nurturing, familial approach, or a more formal approach by mentors. This will be done in April 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #5

The Site Team and I will make an evaluation of the mentor/mentee match in June, allowing time for their personality and behavior styles to mesh. We will interview both mentor and mentee to ensure: that the match leads to strong relationships, mentors maintain a steady presence in the mentees life, showing up for scheduled meetings or when that is not possible, telling the mentee in advance in order to avoid any disappointment, with focus is placed on the mentee's need for fun, acquaintance with family and need to understand that they are not substitutes for parents, and that they seek out and use the help and support of the project staff. This will be done in June 2008.

Strategy #6

We will have a planned Introduction between Mentors, Mentees and Parents to provide everyone with basic information so that they can dialogue and establish a relationship with each other. This will be done in May 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #6

The Site Team and I will evaluate the mentors, mentees, and parents by interview to determine whether this introduction process was necessary for the success of the mentoring program. This will be done in May 2008.

Strategy #7

Mentors & mentees come together for the regular monthly two to three hour mentoring sessions that fall within program parameters. Mentors, other professional African-American women and leadership organizations will make presentations, conduct

workshops and sessions to provide the best education and activities on all topics relating to the problems identified by our young females to help them develop the skills they need in reaching their potential. In addition mentors and mentees will be asked to maintain a personal logbook on their experiences and activities (positive and negative), personal thoughts and reflections on their involvement in the program and evaluative assessments. The logbook will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

Calendar schedules will be made for all participants. The current organizations are: Rev. Alfonso Wyatt, (CEO New York City Fund) Council of Unity, Sister Sol, and The Bronx District Attorney's Office (Community Affairs), among others. This will begin in April 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #7

The Site Team and I will conduct personal and group interviews with the mentors and mentees to hear their feelings about these sessions which will give us insight on how all of these partnering components impact the mentees. These interviews will begin in April and continue throughout the duration of the program. I expect the mentors and mentees to recognize common themes presented by each group, and for the mentees to begin to incorporate more positive attitudes and actions into their lives.

Strategy # 8

We will collect and compile information on the status of the mentees comprising all areas of their development, mentor/mentee relationship, any special intervention methods, grades, problems, personal goals, progress reports, and personal log booklet reports. These informational folders will be stored in a special secured location at the site, but readily accessible. This will be done in June 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #8

The Core Team, Site Team and I will document all reports of each mentee so that we can determine the program's success. We will review all reports and ongoing program activities to make decisions as needed. Ongoing evaluations will be done in May, August, November and December 2008 and as specified by our program guidelines.

Strategy #9

We will invite professional leadership organizations and female professional presenters of African-American descent for periodic discussions on their program's goals, concerns, recommendations and expected outcomes for the mentoring project. This will be done in July, October and December 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #9

The Site Team, Core Team and I will analyze what impact the partnering sources have upon the program after each presentation, most importantly on the mentees. We will evaluate the content of their program agenda, their program goals, methods, established outcomes and determine how their entire program relates to our project goals and guidelines, but most significantly, their impact upon the mentees. We will have the mentees complete an evaluation form on the impact of the partnering organizations, including that of the presenters. I expect some of the presenters to become more supportive of the mentees and the program in general after these initial presentations/evaluations. Some presenters will have more in common with our program than others, and we will attempt to establish long-term relationships with these people/organizations.

Strategy #10

We will have a final evaluation of mentees' overall progress and conclusion report to determine the areas of improvement and success of program. We will evaluate the success and impact of the mentoring: one-on-one mentoring, group gathering sessions, and partnering sources after all of the data (personal interviews, reaction report, log book reviews, verbatim reports and completed survey questionnaires) have been compiled and analyzed to determine the success of the mentoring program.

Evaluation of Strategy #10

The Core Team, Site Team and I will use all of the reports of the mentees to analyze the success of the project. We will know if the implementation of this mentoring project was successful if the findings indicate that all of the mentees have achieved a reasonable percentage of improvement in their problems. We will begin doing this in December of 2008.

This data will allow us to understand the pros and cons of a mentoring program and its impact in the lives of young females in a church setting so that we can establish guidelines for future project refinement. I expect that most of our practices will be continued in future incarnations of the program. I believe we will learn a lot about what not to do from the analysis of the data collected over the entire course of the project, as well. This will eventually lead to the development of a better program in its next incarnation.

Strategy #11

To recognize the contribution of all program participants, mentors, mentees, professional female presenters, leadership organizations, the congregation and supportive

community affiliates but most importantly, the accomplishments for the young females of Butler Church. A closing program will be held to celebrate the participatory efforts of all, as well as our successes and accomplishments through our expressions of gratitude and other tangible ways. The celebration will entail a video recording and a Cable Vision production of all participants, capturing their reactions about this 10-month mentoring journey from March to December of 2008.

Evaluation of Strategy #11

The committees and I will distribute evaluation forms to all participants for completion on all facets of the program both individually and collectively. We will analyze the total impact upon everyone that participated in the program through a detail review of the data, and observable reactions from all participants. This will be done December of 2008.

CHAPTER 4

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Goal # 1

The main objective was to bring awareness to the congregation and the community of Williamsbridge of the great need of a mentoring project for the young females.

Strategy #1

From March 2008 through May 30, 2008 during the 8:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. services, mentoring moments were done by women in the church who were mentors, participants, lay speakers (certified speakers of the New York Annual Conference) and young female mentees. The mentoring moment was from 3 to 5 minutes where the speaker gave a Christian rendition of mentoring from a Biblical viewpoint. I gave the first mentoring moment. The proposed strategy was to have these women preach a homily for the entire service; however, this was changed because this would entail a change from the usual Lectionary sermon. The first mentoring moment on March 2, 2008 was as follows:

The First Mentoring Moment at Butler Church:

Jesus refers to mentoring with love. This was illustrated through the commandment to love the Lord with all thy heart and soul and to love your neighbor as thyself. That is why Jesus told His disciples to go and make more disciples and tell them of God's love. He told them to go throughout the world with this message of love.

Examples of mentoring in the Bible can be seen in Matthew 4:18. Here Jesus selected His disciples and asked them to follow him. Jesus then taught them and gave them the power to go throughout the world and heal people who were sick. Jesus was and still is our Mentor today. For He is teaching us and guiding us to the life that our Father desires us to live.

All of us are aware of the great mentor Paul was to Timothy. In Acts 16:1-2, we see how Paul gave instructions to Timothy because Paul felt that his life was to be shortened. So he wanted Timothy to know and understand God's word, what was right and wrong.¹³

Evaluation of Strategy #1

After each service, approximately 10-20 parishioners were briefly interviewed about the mentoring moment and they rated the mentoring moment on the scale: 5= greatly impressed, 4=impressed, 3=looks good, 2=not impressed, 1=don't know what to think. Over 20% of the parishioners interviewed rated the mentoring program from 3-5. I knew that I had met the program goals.

Strategy #2

Flyers were dispersed through out the Church with special focus in the northex, the social hall, and library. Mentoring pictures were posted in the bulletin of each service.

Evaluation of Strategy #2

I spoke to 10% of the parishioners including the young females about their feelings about the mentoring symbols and announcements about the activities in the mentoring project. I asked them to rate the images from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest. The answers by rating indicated that over 50% fell in the ratings of 3, 4 and 5. I knew that I had met the program goals.

¹³ Youth Horizons, "The Biblical Basis for Mentoring," Youth Horizons, <http://www.youthhorizons.net/mentors/biblicalbasis> (accessed January 20,2008).

Because of the inordinate amount of activities the church was engaged in and the large amount of posted announcements in the bulletin, the mentoring images and symbols ended in May. We were convinced that we had acquired over half percentage rating of church awareness. The mentoring flyers remained throughout the church.

Strategy #3

On May 10, 2008, a special program was conducted for the mentees, mentors and parents. The congregation was also invited. A special presentation was conducted by the director and second program director, Ms. Wendy Holness, informing everyone about the significance of the program to young females and the goals of the proposed project. We were unable to retrieve the video from Mentoring Partnership of New York as planned. Forty-five people attended this session.

Evaluation of Strategy #3

The second program director, two of the Site Team and I spoke to all of the mentors and mentees to gain their insights and feelings about the mentoring program. They all expressed that they were excited about the program and was ready to move forward. We did not use a written evaluation questionnaire at this time but we did speak to all of the participants to make sure they all understood this new mentoring program that would be implemented. Everyone expressed that they fully understood the vision and mission of the program.

Goal #2

Our basic objective was to train mentors, members of the Core Team, Youth Council and Ad Hoc Committees to implement this mentoring program to meet the needs of the young females.

Strategy #1

The Site Team and I recruited six members of the Core Team who would act as an advisory group. They would work with the Site Team to assist in the overall operation of the mentoring program. We recruited persons who were well known for their leadership skills and had experience working with youth.

Evaluation of Strategy #1

The Site Team and I selected six people who we felt met the criteria to be a part of the Core Team.

Strategy #2

During the first two weeks in March, a quick but thorough recruitment of mentors for the program was done based on recommendations. The Site Team and I discussed their biographies and references. 18 applicants were invited for interviews on March 22, 2008. We did not use the Ad Hoc Committee as planned.

Evaluation of Strategy #2

The Site Team, Wendy Holness and I interviewed and selected the mentors based on the criteria that we had established. The women selected were grounded in the Christian doctrine and their lives reflected the same. 35 % of the women were known by the director for 30-35 years, 30% were women referred by two pastors in the community, 20% were recruited from Butler Church, 10% were recommended by the second program director, 5% were recommended by a Christian educator. 80% of this total was from other churches. These selected women included Christian educators, missionaries, ministers, and other church leaders. All of the women were highly recommended based on their Christian based background. Each of them had experience working with girls,

leadership abilities, love and compassion for people, character, integrity and dedication.

Strategy #3

The Site Team and I reaffirmed that we would definitely use the New York Mentoring Partnership as the training agency. A letter request for training was sent to Bruce Beckwith for scheduled training.

Evaluation of Strategy #3

All staff participants and mentors were scheduled for training by the New York Mentoring Partnership Director, Bruce Beckwith. Training was conducted on March 22, 2008. Most of the mentors were trained and ready for one-on-one mentoring. The first session of the mentoring program began with an “Acquaintance and Fellowship Continental Breakfast” and a brief interviewing process with all of the mentors. This was done by the Site Team, Wendy Holness and I. It commenced at 10:30 A.M. with invocation, words of welcome and introduction of the Presenter/Trainer for the day, Bruce Beckwith from the Mentoring Partnership of New York City. 18 mentors attended and participated in three hours of training. On this day, 5 participants also received training.

Strategy #4

On April 12, 2008, an orientation gathering was conducted with the mentors and program staff for discussion on program objectives and understanding of the mentoring program. The mentors had an opportunity to become acquainted with each other and meet all of the Site Team and participants.

Evaluation of Strategy #4

The Site Team and I agreed that all of these women had acquired adequate

understanding of the mentoring program and were ready to participate in the mentoring program. There was an orientation session with the mentors where they met all of the Site Team and volunteers. We had discussions on the important aspects of the mentoring program. Many questions were asked by the mentors and we responded with the appropriate answers.

Goal #3

The Mentoring program was in operation at Butler Church and bringing about a transformation in the lives of young females. On 4/22/08, the Butler Mentoring Program was added to the CAYM website.

Strategy #1

To avoid tapping into the Church's general financial operating funds, concerted efforts were made to obtain funding. Letters were sent to many business entrepreneurs in the community asking for funds for the mentoring program as well as frequent requests to the Church membership. A model letter was sent to the community entrepreneurs and banks explaining the dynamics of the Butler Mentoring program.

By April 21, 2008, we had received contributions in the amount of \$1000 from two businessmen. By May 2008, we had received a total of \$1,550 in contributions. All funds were made out to Butler Memorial United Methodist Church and placed under a special category for distribution by the Financial Committee. When funds were requested by the program director, a voucher was signed by financial officers before being given to the program director. The program director was very meticulous in maintaining a paper trail of all receipts corresponding to the funds spent for the Mentoring Program.

The funds were used to provide meals for monthly sessions, movie tickets,

pictures, and flowers for the presenters.

On April 17, I was contacted by Oprah Winfrey's media manager via phone acknowledging receipt of the letter requesting Oprah Winfrey to mentor these girls for seven months; however, Ms. Winfrey indicated that with her busy schedule, it would be impossible. She did indicate that she found this to be a great program and suggested contact with Angel Network. A follow-up sponsor request letter was sent to Angel Network but to no avail. Sponsor request letters were sent to Chase Bank and Michael and Virginia Mortar Foundations, but responses indicated that while they considered it a great program, their program guidelines were not geared toward this type of project.

Evaluation of Strategy #1

The Site Team and I were pleased with the donations received for the program. Our budget would be based on this monetary resource and our planned expenditures for the nine-month project. We did not have to request any monies from the Church Council for any expenditure as a result of this resource.

Strategy #2

The Site Team and I recruited and selected mentees for the program. I requested a list of the girls between the ages of 12-16 from the church Superintendent. Letters were sent to the parents informing them of the significance of the program and requesting them to respond if they were interested in having their daughter participate. Information was also forwarded on the dynamics, purpose and expected outcomes of the Butler Mentoring Project. Parents responded to the letter request via mail or phone, consenting to have their daughters participate in the mentoring program.

Concerted efforts were made by Wendy Holness at Friday night sessions to recruit

girls who were non-members, lived in the community, took part in the ministry, completed the surveys and could benefit from the program.

Evaluation of strategy #2

The Site Team and I accepted all of the mentees referred based on their interest, commitment to being consistent in their participation in the program, willingness to discuss new ideas and their overall desire to affect change in their lives.

On April 12, 2008 the mentoring program had a Kick Off session with the mentees and parents meeting at the site. Twenty girls came and registered for the program. A continental breakfast was served. 30 % of the parents attended the session. Many of the parents contacted the program director and second program director and stated that they were either working or had other planned engagements. They however indicated that they were happy that their girls were a part of this intervention program.

The Site Team reviewed the names of the mentees and having knowledge of most of the girls, the consensus was that these girls would be good candidates for the mentoring and could benefit in some way or the other. We were aware that while only about 41% of the girls registering to be in the program actually were involved in the survey questionnaire given on a Friday Night Ministry, we decided not to deny any girl an opportunity to participate. The other 59% were girls who were members of the church, but not involved in the Friday night ministry where the questionnaires were completed. Many of the girls that attend the Friday Night ministry are from the community and not necessarily members of the church.

We had our 20 girls for the mentoring program whose age range fell in the guidelines of the program. It was now our goal to provide the very best mentoring

possible and bring about a transformation in the lives of these girls in some way or the other.

Strategy #3

Bruce Beckwith, director of the Mentoring Partnership of New York stated that he felt that Wendy Holness and I were knowledgeable enough to provide the appropriate information for these mentees. He suggested that Wendy Holness and I prepare a training packet and provide training to the mentees. He provided all of the information that would be appropriate. On April 26, 2008, we provided training to the mentees on the purpose of the mentoring program and tried to ascertain what each girl desired to get out of the program. The mentees asked many questions about the mentors and what they would do as a team.

The second hour-long session was done by the program director. During this session information was provided to the girls on the confidentiality code, and guidelines that they were expected to adhere to with emphasis on their relationship with their mentors. The session ended with lunch and distribution of a gift bag for each mentee, which included items like a comb, brush, mirror and other cosmetic items.

Evaluation of Strategy #3

The mentors and mentees were trained, understood the purpose and dynamics of the Butler Christian mentoring program and were ready for the mentoring process to begin. During this session, the Site Team and I conducted discussions on whether the training provided by Wendy Holness and myself was effective for these girls to begin the mentoring process. The Site Team agreed that in view of all of the literature and information that we provided and our actual presentation, the training was effective

enough to appropriately move forward with mentoring. They stated that we were clear, succinct, exciting and convincing. The Site Team was confident that the girls saw this program as something to look forward to and that would benefit them. I spoke to all of the participants to ascertain their response and reaction. They all agreed that they thought the presentation was good and would be viable and effective for these girls.

Strategy #4

The mentors, mentees and parents met at the Church for an acquaintance hour on May 10. The director provided a session on the purpose and dynamics of mentoring, and to determine if the parents and girls had determined whether the program would meet the needs of the girls.

The Site Team, Wendy Holness and I spoke to all of the mentees on site to make sure that they fully understood the mentoring program and were ready to move forward. Most of the parents came to the session; however, some had called prior to the meeting to inform us that they would be absent due to work schedules and other engagements. By May 22, 2008, there were 15 confirmed mentees with documented parental agreement forms signed. Parents expressed that they felt the program would benefit their girls and meet some of their needs. They signed the consent form and consent forms were sent via mail to parents who did not attend the session.

Evaluation of Strategy #4

I contacted all of the parents via phone to make sure they fully understood the purpose and plans for the mentoring program. They all expressed satisfaction about the proposed mentoring program and stated that they wanted to move forward with the program operation. Several of the parents expressed that their daughters would be going

away for vacation for no longer than a month but would be continuing with the program upon return.

Strategy #5

A match work sheet was devised to facilitate the matching of mentor and mentee based on compatibility factors supplied on the devised mentee/mentor interest survey. Matches were based on the standardized guidelines of the Mentoring Partnership of New York such as similar interests both mentor and the mentee share including: hobbies, lifestyle and family make-up, personality and behavior styles such as nurturing attitude, familial approach, or a more formal approach by mentors.

In June 2008, letters were sent to mentors and mentees informing them of their match and directing the mentors to move forward with one-on-one mentoring. The Butler Mentoring Manual was completed and distributed to the Site Team, all mentors, mentees, and participants. Initial surveys were given to girls to complete, and on-going scheduling of training for mentors who had not received training was established. Our program was now up and running.

Evaluation of Strategy #5

Because of this unprecedented youth intervention initiative at Butler Church and the noted cultural issues, the Site Team and I decided that we would not conduct the proposed intense interviewing of each mentee. Instead we would speak to them in an informal setting that was done at the site, before the movie outing and the gathering at McDonald's. This method was effective for the mentees and they felt comfortable talking about their match experiences and showed the desire to talk about their newly matched mentor. They appeared excited, with a lot of curiosity about how this new

relationship would flourish.

Wendy Holness, Rev. Abel, and I conferred with the mentees and mentors directly and via phone to see how the matches were going. We questioned them about consistency in their meeting times, their activities, and their goals. Wendy Holness and I also had the same kind of session with the mentors at McDonald's where we discussed the matches, soliciting for progress, problems, etc.

Strategy #6

During the specially planned program with mentors, mentees, parents and program staff during the business meeting, the director held discussions on the topic of the on-going matching of mentor/mentee. The mentees and mentors were not too vocal about their experiences. Some of the mentors and mentees had not yet met. The mentees and mentors that did have initial meetings however expressed that they were excited about their mentoring experience thus far.

Evaluation of strategy #6

The Site Team and I met with the mentors /mentees and had discussions about their experiences (mentors/mentees). The overall consensus of the Site Team was that we were able to get some insights about the feelings from both mentor/mentee; however, it was too early in the program with the one-on-one experiences to make valid assessments about the relationships.

The Site Team and I decided that we would be making periodic evaluations later in the program, allowing time for their personality and behavior styles to mesh. We would interview both mentor and mentee to ensure that the match led to strong relationships. We also wanted to know if there was consistency in the mentors/mentees

meeting schedule. We also wanted to emphasize to the mentors that focus be placed on the needs of the mentees.

Strategy #7

The regular monthly two to three hour mentoring sessions were in operation. Presenters, professional African-American women throughout the metropolitan area and leadership organizations began to make presentations and conduct workshops. Because of the very loaded calendar schedule for Butler Church it was difficult to schedule monthly sessions very far in advance. There were always modifications.

We did not proceed with using several of the organizations that we were planning to use. Instead, our focus was on successful African American women from the public and private sectors of the government and corporate world. The women that we used are as follows: The Honorable Darcell Clark (Manhattan District Attorney Office), Dr. Jennifer Misick (Bronx Community College), Attorney Colette Stanford, Dr. Sandra White (Atlanta, Georgia), Regina Webster Adolphus, and Delphine Lambert.

Evaluation of Strategy #7

After each presentation, devised evaluation forms were distributed to everyone to express their feelings about the sessions. We had individual and group interviews with the mentees and mentors about the presenters. We wanted the mentors and mentees to recognize common themes presented by each woman and for the mentees to begin to incorporate more positive attitudes and actions into their lives. This gave us insight on how all of these great leaders were impacting the mentees.

Some of the comments made were:

“They gave me a different outlook about my career opportunities.” I have more hope for achieving my goals”.

“I believe that I can be just as successful as any man in society”.

“I realize more each day that being patient is very important to being successful”.

Strategy #8

All pertinent information on the mentees was documented on areas of their development, mentor/mentee relationship, grades, problems (if any), and personal goals. All information was kept in folders and stored at the director's residence because there was no space at the church to secure this most confidential information.

Evaluation of Strategy #8

The Site Team and I reviewed the folders and monthly reports, evaluations by mentors, parental evaluations, mentee evaluations, and focused on their development, relationships, any special intervention methods, grades, problems, personal goals and progress reports. We wanted to get a sense of the overall progress of each mentee. Assessments were done in August and December 2008.

Strategy #9

We invited successful African American women from the public and private sectors throughout the Metropolitan area who came and made presentations to everyone in the mentoring program. Each presenter spoke about their life experiences and their challenge in achieving their career goals. Dr. Sandra White is the Medical Director at WellPoint, Inc. in Atlanta, Georgia. She served as a partnering source with the mentoring program. She provided a special presentation on teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted

diseases and HIV/AIDS.

Delphine Lambert, a career opportunity specialist, gave a presentation on nursing scholarship programs with the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation. In addition, she spoke about different types of colleges and what they offer, and the stereotypes and myths of attending certain colleges.

Regina Webster, Educational Training Specialist at Jacobi Medical Center gave a presentation at the site and also provided a guided tour to the mentees and the tour was on the following medical divisions: The Hyper baric Chamber, Food and Nutrition, Labor and Delivery, Labs, Radiology, and Central Sterile Supply.

Ayrius Granby, noted humanitarian, gave a presentation on her field of work, Nursing. Attorney Jevet Johnson, of the Bronx District Attorney's Office, gave a presentation on the justice system and opportunities for women. Attorney Colette Stanford, attorney in the private sector gave information on career opportunities for women. Dr. Jennifer Misick of the Bronx Community College gave a wealth of information on education and career opportunities for minority youth. The Honorable Darcel D. Clark is a currently elected Judge to the Criminal Court of the City of New York. She gave a presentation on the entire justice system and career opportunities for minorities in society. Completed evaluations of all program presenters, activities (movies, field trips, guided tours), and program staff were documented.

Evaluation of Strategy #9

The Core Team, Site Team and I had a detailed meeting on the impact that these great women have made upon the mentees. We looked at what was reported on the evaluation questionnaires to see how they were impacted. The information supplied by

the mentees showed that all of the girls were positively impacted by these presenters.

When answering the question on the evaluation questionnaire “What impressed you most about the presenter?” One mentee stated, “The presenter’s statement that minorities must work hard for what they want in life, never give up on hope, and make use of opportunities while you can”. Another mentee said, “I was most impressed by the life experiences the presenters shared with us”.

Strategy #10

We had a final evaluation of the overall mentee progress and a conclusion report to measure the Butler Mentoring Program. We have evaluated the success and impact of the program: one-on-one mentoring, group gathering sessions, professional women presentations, and all completed questionnaires and have successfully measured this program.

Evaluation of strategy #10

The Site Team and I have used all of the reports to measure the program. We have found that this mentoring program was successful because the findings achieved were a reasonable percentage of improvement in all of the areas of their problems (see “Findings” below). This data has allowed us to understand the pros and cons of our mentoring program and its impact on the lives of young females in a church setting so that we can establish more guidelines for future project refinement.

Strategy #11

On 12/6/2008, we had a closing celebration recognizing the contributions of every one who made concerted efforts to make the Butler Mentoring program a success by impacting the lives of these beautiful girls and bringing about a transformation in their

lives so that they can become great, successful African-American women in the world.

We were pleased to recognize the contribution of all program participants, mentors, professional women presenters, leadership organizations, the congregation and supportive community affiliates but most importantly, the accomplishments for the young females of Butler Church. A closing journal was formulated, inclusive of the pictures and bios of all mentees, mentors and Site Team. Award certificates were also distributed to the mentors, an album with many pictures of the mentees and mentors and a manual on the policies and guidelines of the mentoring program. Our initial plans to create a video and a CableVision production were not completed.

Evaluation of strategy #11

The Site Team and I collected all of the evaluations to make this most important evaluation and assessment of the Butler Mentoring project (see “Findings” below).

Findings

A survey questionnaire on the topics of educational aspiration, self-esteem, and feelings of failure of the mentee was conducted on a scale rating from 1-5, 5 being the highest. 14 youth responded positively to having an interest in going to college and placing values in doing well. Two of the 14 were at risk to be held over due to poor educational performance (they were supported by counseling, tutoring, and /or purchasing of supportive educational materials). They showed improvement, and were promoted to the next grade and showed increased interest in attending college.

Under the topic of self-esteem, 13 chose the highest rating for self-esteem level. One girl chose a very low rating. The overall report reflects high self-esteem among the girls. Under the topic of feelings of failure, 13 girls felt strongly that they were not

failures, one provided no answer. Under the topic of feeling proud of yourself, 13 rated the very high, one rated low.

A second survey conducted in August 2008 with 16 girls showed that 11 of the girls were satisfied with their grades, which fell in the numerical range of 80 to 93. 5 indicated that they were not satisfied with their grades, which ranged from 65 to 88. 13 reported being satisfied with self-esteem, 3 reported not being satisfied, 14 reported having peer pressure under control, 2 indicated they did not, 8 reported wanting parental involvement in their life, 8 reported not wanting parental involvement.

Results of the Final survey conducted in November showed that 60% reported that their skills have progressed as a result of the program. One youth said that she is now more attentive, thinking before acting and more generous. The other 40% reported that their skills have not been developed. 100 % reported that they have benefited from the presenters in the following ways: increased knowledge about their careers, sex, sexually transmitted diseases, self-esteem and peer pressure. One girl said presently she is not influenced by her peers as much since participating in the mentoring program.

Overall the girls described the speakers as informative, motivational, kind, and convincing. One girl said, "Seeing these African-American successful women come and speak about their lives made me feel good". Another said, "Listening to them lets me know that I can do the same in my life". Still another said, "I just never thought seriously about how many important African-American women we have in society."

50% said they now know what career they want to pursue and the other 50% said they are not sure, but the program has brought awareness of what direction they should take. 100 % of the mentees said listening to the life experiences and challenges of the

speakers gave them encouragement to further pursue their education. 50% said their grades improved and attributes this to the mentoring program, 50% said their grades improved but do not credit the mentoring program.

All of the mentees reported that their mentors helped them in some ways.

Some of the statements reported by the girls:

- “My mentor expresses her thoughts and feelings with me. It lets me know that my feelings are okay.”
- “My mentor encourages and supports me”.
- “My mentor has helped me by letting me know that no matter how low women stand to men in society that as a female I can do anything I put my mind to.”

Parents expressed that the program benefited their daughters in several ways.

Some of the statements made by parents on evaluation forms:

- “My daughter is more motivated now”.
- “My daughter is more concerned about her future and she expresses herself more now”.
- “My daughter has more confidence in herself now”.
- “My daughter is more concerned about her career opportunities.”

The Butler Mentoring Program has been proven to be successful because the overall findings show a reasonable amount of improvement in most areas of the challenge.

CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RESEARCH QUESTION #1

According to current research what are the issues facing “at risk” young females in today’s society? What are the present challenges and what needs to be done in dealing with these issues?

In response to the questions above I will discuss the following critical topics concerning young females such as: the factors that cause females to become “at risk”. Intervention strategies we can use and their impact in dealing with at risk females.

Factors That Cause Females to Become at Risk

One of the first issues I noticed when researching this question was that many of our young people come from broken homes. The adult supervision was either inadequate or nonexistent. When comparing our group’s percentage with that found throughout our community, the numbers were strikingly compatible.

A large number of youth are from Single Parent Homes.

- 9 / 14 single parents 64%
- 3/ 14 married parents 22%
- 2/ 14 adopted/ kinship 14%

A significant percentage of youth had at least 1 deceased parent:

- 4/ 14 girl reported death of a parent and indicated adjustment issues due to death of a parent

A significant number of youth participants indicate direct or second hand exposure to violence:

- Second hand- knows someone who was killed or assaulted or has access to a knife/gun 8/14- 58%
- Direct- experienced personal act of violence or was present during act of violence against another 3/14- 21%
- None 3/ 14- 21%

There are many factors that cause females to become at risk. Ginny Olson refers to **self-esteem** as a critical factor in the behavior of teens. It is very important in the lives of young females because it is how a girl thinks of herself. If she is not satisfied with how she looks she may have poor self-esteem and won't feel good about herself.

Then she will have problems with her true identity and who she really thinks she is. She may want to be someone else and sometimes a girl may be so dissatisfied with herself that she will try to hide who she really is and act under a bogus-self to people she comes in contact with.

She may go to the extent of trying to do things that she really is not capable of doing. She will then become frustrated because she is actually trying to be someone who she is not. She will have this mind-set that she must be perfect and she will not settle for anything less.

Her faith maybe shattered because she begins to believe that God may not love her because of her imperfections. We as leaders and mentors must assure our girls that

God loves us all in spite of our sins and imperfections.¹⁴

The Bible teaches us, “For all of us have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23 NIV). This scripture can be the educational factor embedded within the minds of our young females to accept and understand the imperfections of humankind. This can be a contributing factor in helping in her self-esteem.

In exploring the many factors of at risk females, Ginny Olson focuses on three critical areas in the life of an adolescent female. She says girls are asking themselves “who am I”? They are trying to find their true identity. She wants to know if she is important. She is trying to figure out the reason why she is here on this earth and finally, where is her life leading? She wants to know what her relationship with God and people are in general as she is interacting with people in the world. She is very curious about all of these things especially as she sees her body going through changes. She is really asking herself some deep-seated question about why she is here on planet earth. She knows that life is a mystery but she wants the best that she can get from this life. Naturally, one important thing she wants to know is if she is a normal human in all respects (physically and mentally).¹⁵

Girls are certainly impacted by their peers in formulating their identity and who they want to be. They want to be normal naturally, but they also want to look like the peers around them, so peer identity plays a great role and may be the determining factor to girls searching for their true identity.

Eric Erickson’s view on adolescent girls is that a lot of teen girls’ actions depend on the mood she is in. Sometimes she may have mood changes because there is a lot

¹⁴ Olson, *Teenage Girls*, 27.

going on inside of her and this affects how she reacts. Some days she may understand that she is maturing because she sees the change in her body and other days she doesn't understand anything. In all cases she will react emotionally according to her feelings. Sometimes she may be happy that she is growing out of the juvenile stage and transitioning into this adolescent period and other days she may be sorry that she is not still a kid. Erickson says that this entire process that girls go through does not happen over night, it is what everyone will say it is, a process. As life goes on these girls, like boys, will change in their whole being, personalities, likes, and dislikes. During this time girls will also change in their belief system and will be very inquisitive about every thing. She wants answers and will go back to establishing her true identity. The most important thing is that she is trying to see how she relates to all of these people in her life.¹⁶

Many scholars believe that **identity** is a factor in young ladies being “at risk” and the most important phase of the adolescent's life. According to Erikson, “The adolescent phase of life deals with the issue of ‘identity versus identity confusion’.”¹⁷

Authors A.C. Lacombe and J. Gay state that it is good for adolescent girls to try to understand who they really are and their place in society, but what is not good is when they get close to the end of adolescence and don't know who they are. This is the true identity confusion. During this time girls are searching and trying to figure out who they really want to be. However, if she is still going to church wearing inappropriate clothing she still does not know who she wants to be. What is interesting about this entire identity confusion is that it does not only apply to adolescents but also to adults. It is a

¹⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹⁶ Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1950), 17.

¹⁷ Ibid.

life long process of trying to figure out who you are as you mature and get old.¹⁸

Strategies

We have looked at a few of the factors and strategies in dealing with at risk females. Now we will focus on some very strong strategies of dealing with a girl's ability to develop their **identities**. Olson says:

- * Teach the girls how different cultures define identity and self-esteem
- * Create environments where girls can begin to comprehend how unique and how normal they are
- * Have girls write down their dreams and then develop plans for how to achieve them
- * Laugh! Laughter is great for boosting self confidence¹⁹

Peer pressure is another “at risk” factor among females. Foucault's description of peers and peer groups is interesting. He states that among the many “at risk” factors among teens, peer pressure is profound because peers absorb more from other peers than any other group. These peers will present ways for them to measure their competencies. Again, peer groups are profound in that they can help other peers in formulating their identity. Peer groups can afford other peers the opportunity to show their ability and ideas about many things by interacting with others and be able to see their powers. He says most of the times adults perceive peer pressure as unfavorable behaviors of teens but this really does not reflect that grounded experience of high-risk teens. What youths do is try to enhance their position with their peers so they can keep a good relation with their peers.²⁰

¹⁸ A.C. Lacombe and J. Gay, “The Role of Gender in Adolescent Identity and Intimacy Decisions,” *Journal of Youth & Adolescence* 27 (1998): 7895-7902.

¹⁹ Olson, 29.

²⁰ Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” *Critical Inquiry* 8 (1982): 777-795.

Peers really do have a great influence upon their female counterparts. Most girls have certain girls that they want to be with and these are the girls that will impact their lives tremendously. Reminiscing about junior and high school, I remember wanting to be with girls who were serious about their academic work and their educational goals. These are the girls that I wanted to be like so I attached myself to this clique. I engaged in the activities that they were in. I believed in the noted adage “Birds of a feather flocked together”. I was impacted by my peers tremendously but in a positive way.

Leslie Kaplan says that peer pressure significantly affects the way adolescents behave and their attitudes. This teen influence can be seen in the way peers dress, the music they listen to, and their friends.²¹

She further states:

You’ve probably heard peer pressure and have also experienced it! It sounds like emotional blackmail.

“Come on, everyone else is doing it.”

“Don’t be a wimp.”

“You dress like my parents.”

“Come on, you never do anything wrong.”

Sometimes teens and their friends all want the same thing. At other times, teens act against what they privately want just to stay part of the group.²²

Kaplan also says, “The attraction of having friends make some teens act, dress, talk, play, and think as their friends do. Nothing is forced; instead it only feels as if it is.”²³

The Focus Adolescence Service says that even though teens spend more time with

²¹ Dennis Cook and Jon Dayley, “Peer Pressure during Adolescence,” Developmental Psychology Student NetLetter, http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/dept/d46/psy/dev/Fall99/peer_pressure/index.html (accessed January 29,2008).

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

other teens they can effectively develop their own identity while they sort of break away from that great parental influence. Even though families will encourage their teens by saying good and encouraging things, for some reason teens still are more impressed with how their peers perceive them. Some of the things that can help a teen in establishing positive peer pressure depend on how strong their self-esteem is and their dependence factor upon people. We must always remember that positive peer pressure can help in the success of teens. It can be a supportive mechanism for the teen in times when they need help. We must always remember that it is always the need for teens to be accepted and approved by other teens. If they feel rejected and are not liked by their peers, they are very vulnerable to take chances just to be a part of that group.²⁴

Negative peer groups will just not help teens in any way. A lot of times teens will keep secrets when they are controlled by their peers. And some of these hidden transcripts can be very dangerous issues in their lives. Many times these teens will get in trouble with law enforcement, drugs and other social ills. Most of the time the friends or peers your teen hangs around with are indicative of who they are or are becoming.

Parents can always be supportive with positive peer pressure by showing love, quality time and encouraging their teens to be able to think for themselves as they make important choices and decisions in their life. If parents show interest in their teens' activities, they will have the ability to monitor them better, so they will know what they are doing and who their friends are. Having this kind of relationship with teens will allow parents to take a more assertive stance when something negative does occur. When parents encourage their teens to be independent, teens will be more prone to negative

²⁴ Focus Adolescent Services, "Your Teen's Friends: Peer Influence & Peer Relationships," Focus Adolescent Services, <http://www.focusas.com/PeerInfluence.html> (accessed February 24, 2007).

peer resistance.²⁵

B. Doll in her work *Children without Friends*, states that:

Peers can have the greatest influence and impact upon each other during this period of adolescence. Peers can actually help in formulating the identity of other peers. This is why it is so important that teens establish relationships with positive people. This will also give teen's confidence in who they are, increase their self-esteem and help them in being a friend to others. Bad relationships can leave a stigma in the lives of individuals and can actually cause them to have emotional and mental conditions, because they lose trust in people.²⁶

Another factor with "at risk" females is **her ability to cope with body images**.

People who know about teens know that one of the most important factors to them is how they look, or their perception of how their bodies look. Most of society understands and feels that it is normal for a teen to gain some weight as they mature; however, teens may see it as becoming obese. Then as the teen continues to mature she will begin to get curves in the beginning process of becoming a woman. The problem is, not all teen girls understand this process or even welcome it.²⁷

I have seen many young females who have suffered tremendously emotionally because of their struggle with how they look. It is however a normal behavioral response that adults also experience. Today's society has a preconditioned idea of how everyone should look, and if one does not look that way, oftentimes they may not be treated the way they would desire. Young females are subjected to this preconceived notion. We should also be aware that even adult women are faced with this same challenge because

²⁵ Focus Adolescent Services, "Your Teen's Friends: Peer Influence & Peer Relationships."

²⁶ B. Doll, "Children without Friends: Implications for Practice and Policy" *School Psychology Review* 25 (1996): 165-183.

of society's perception of how women should look.

One mother distinctly told me that her daughter's biggest problem was peer pressure and she was very concerned because she knew how powerfully it can have an impact upon her. She expressed that this was the main reason she wanted her daughter in the program. In her evaluation of her daughter's status at the end of the program, she stated that she saw improvement in her daughter's behavior. She cited that her daughter was not appearing as excited about hanging out with the street kids as before. She said that The Butler Mentoring Program kept her daughter busy with one-on-one mentoring and monthly sessions and she could see that her daughter really misses the program. She indicated that she hopes the program will not stay in hiatus long.

It is a proven fact that positive relations with peers can be advantageous in helping girls to build their confidence and their self-esteem. Girls need to belong and know they share some commonality with others.

Professor Constance Hammen states, "Another issue that adolescent girls face at higher rates than boys is **depression**. In fact, one of the highest risk factors for depression is being female. By the time they reach 15, girls are twice as likely as boys to be depressed".²⁸ On this topic of female versus male depression, Dr. Lisa Machoian's comment is "This is a switch from childhood, where typically boys are more depressed

²⁷ Sarah Winkeller, "CASA Hosted Conference on Substance Abuse and Eating Disorders," The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, <http://www.casacolumbia.org/absolutenm/templates/PressReleases.aspx?articleid=113&zoneid=48> (accessed February 24, 2007).

²⁸ Constance Hammen, "Teenage Depression Can Be Enduring, but Is More Often Short-Lived, Reports UCLA Psychology Professor, in Address to American Psychological Society," UCLA Newsroom, <http://newsroom.ucla.edu/portal/ucla/Teenage-Depression-Can-Be-Enduring-6188.aspx> (accessed February 24, 2007).

than girls”.²⁹

This topic prompts me to explore reasons why there have been changes in depression in boys and girls. Could it be social factors or physiological? It could also be the cultural trends that affect boys differently from girls. From observation of boys, I do not think that boys worry about life issues as much as girls in most situations. My opinion is based on my two sons. They both have been much more cavalier about life circumstances as opposed to my daughter who has always been serious about most circumstances and values life and what happens very highly. She is more concerned and worries more while the boys worry less. In addressing this topic, the authors Cathy Schoen, Karen Davis, and Karen Scott Collins stated

In one study of adolescent girls, 23 % of the girls reported that within the past two weeks, they had experienced at least a few symptoms of depression. Ten percent of the girls reported that their symptoms were severe.³⁰

In their study concerning depression, S. Luthar and B. Becker state

Not only is being female a risk factor, so is her location. If a girl lives in the suburbs, she's three times more likely to experience significant symptoms of depression (22 percent versus seven percent of others).³¹

As concerned leaders in ministry, we must continue to be involved in the lives of our youth. They will be our men and women of the 21st Century. Psalm 127:3 says “Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him” (Psalm 127:3 NIV). God has commissioned us to teach, train and mentor our youth so that they may emulate

²⁹ Lisa Machoian. *The Disappearing Girl* (New York: Penguin Group, 2005), 28.

³⁰ Cathy Schoen, Karen Davis, Karen Scott Collins et.al., “The Commonwealth Fund Survey of the Health of Adolescent Girls,” The Commonwealth Fund, http://www.cmwf.org/publications/publications_show.htm?doc_id=221230 (accessed November 30,2007).

³¹ Suniya S. Luthar and Bronwyn E. Becker, “Privileged But Pressured,” *Child Development* 73, no. 5, (2002): 1595.

the life of Christ here earth. The Bible implies that children are a gift from God and a sign of His favor. The emphasis here is on gift, not just the result of fertility. And heritage is also a gift, not just possession. God wants us to love and cherish our youth, be involved in their life and do all that we can to help them in processing their feelings so that they may successfully deal with all of the “at risk” factors that life will impose.

RESEARCH QUESTION #2

How do other models of mentoring young females compare to Butler’s and what if anything can we learn from them as we continue our mentoring program at Butler Church?

This chapter will focus on the following topics: Profiles of several mentoring programs including females and other diverse-serviced programs. What have we learned from research on African-American females and Mentoring programs?

Girls Quest

The first mentoring program that was researched was Girls Quest. Girls Quest is a great mentoring program in New York exclusively for girls. The program’s site is 1520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 2020 New York 10018. It was founded in 1936 as Girls Vacation Fund by Ruth Uarda and Zirkle Kauth who at that time was a social worker at the Henry Street Settlement House. She began the program after she realized that there was a need to provide recreation and health programs for the sisters of boys attending the Boys Athletic League’s summer programs, which her husband, Willare L. Kauth, co-founded.

The first camp was started in 1936, at Camp Manitou in Central Valley, N.Y., to give 100 girls between the ages of 8 and 13 a two-week vacation. They changed the

name to Girls Quest in July 2005. They changed the name because they wanted to put more emphasis on what the program really represented, with the developments in the program since inception and they felt that the new name Girls Quest reflected all of these developments. They also wanted to emphasize all of the aspects of the on-going yearly programming.

There has been some modification to focus on the tremendous need to service low-income families in New York and to help these girls achieve their full potential and become successful, productive women in the world. Through the accomplishment of these goals, this organization has clearly defined their position as a pioneer of empowering these girls to become strong, productive women for 70 years. Their work centers on outdoor experiential education, literacy development, adult mentoring, leadership training, and peer-to-peer learning and role modeling.

Girls Quest is similar to Butler in its goals and objectives for mentoring. They are as follows:

- Increase girls' sense of self worth
- Improve girls' perspective toward education
- Help girls develop and define short and long term goals
- Provide them with positive support and encouragement³²

Their recruiting process follows the same pattern as Butler's: the completion of the mentor application, providing three (non-related) references in contrast to two required references for Butler's, along with an updated resume. There is an interview process, and thirdly, the training follows the same principles as Butler. The only distinct difference is that they require a complete background screening of potential mentors,

³² Girls' Vacation Fund, "Mentoring Program Overview," Girls Quest, <http://www.girlsquest.org/prog.mentor.overview.html> (accessed November 30, 2007).

while Butler's application process entails the interview and non-official law enforcement background check in use currently. This will be employed further as the program develops in 2009.

With respect to the success of Girls Quest, it reported that they reached their proposed goals in 2005, which was 40 matches. Their program objective was a commitment by mentors for at least one year; however it could extend beyond, to two or more years. The mentor and mentee had meetings together for at least 6-8 hours per month. They shared all kinds of great and varied quality time together which was inclusive of educational and cultural activities and as a result of this great intervention there were:

- Increased communication skills utilizing email, phone, and surface email, as well as in person, to communicate with their mentors
- Increased sense of self-worth with the ongoing encouragement of their trained mentors
- A greater sense of empathy and caring for others by evidencing greater trust, better relationships with family and community, and a greater sense of their responsibility for the world around them
- Leadership skills that will encourage extracurricular activities, planning, and decision-making and a sense of personal power over choices in their lives³³

Everyone involved in the process continues to report improvement in the lives of the mentees.

- On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being highest, 76% of mentees reported in their semiannual survey that their relationship with their mentors rated, on average, 9.
- There was a 19% increase after the initial sixth months in mentees expressing belief that they could do anything they put their mind to.
- Initially, 29% of mentees had reported that their ability to express their own feelings was between poor and very poor. After one year in the program, 67% of mentees felt that their ability to express their own

³³ Girls' Vacation Fund, "Mentoring Program Overview."

feelings had improved from average to very good.

- Mentees' outlook on their futures improved significantly, from 45% initially feeling that it was very good, to 100% at the end of one year in the program.³⁴

The program is geared towards services for African-American girls. Butler's mentoring program is also geared towards African-American adolescents. It does not preclude other ethnic groups or declare non-acceptance of other groups. Because of the 95% Afrocentric population, the program focus makes up that profile. When we look at refinement of the program in the future, this will be a topic of discussion. This may entail recruiting other ethnic groups and having successful women presenters from other ethnic groups. If our assessment deems modifications are necessary, they will be patterned after similar standardized mentoring approaches that service varied ethnic groups throughout the United States.

The Blue Nile Passage, Inc.

The Blue Nile Passage, Inc. is a similar mentoring program to Butler in its goals, clientele served, and overall dynamics in terms of continuity in proposed goals. It is a non-profit organization and a faith-based initiative of Thurgood Marshall Academy located at 4 West 125 St. It is a great mentoring program under the Abyssinian Corporation. While being a Christian mentoring project with a Christian approach, it is a corporation in contrast to most of the mentoring programs throughout the metropolitan area.

The program was designed specifically to cater to African-American youth, (girls and boys of all age groups) located in the center of Harlem. The basic goal of Blue Nile Passage is to provide a sense of hope for African-American teens in their spiritual,

³⁴ Ibid.

emotional, social, intellectual and cultural development. The program tries to encourage and assure the mentees that they can be the best that they can. It is nationally known for its rites of passage program.³⁵

Some of their specific goals are that they offer youth opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge and tools they will need to meet the challenges in life. It provides information to help them understand who they are, where they have come from, where they must go and what they must do. The program provides educational resources that will allow them to become productive individuals in society. It gives them the insight to see the world through an African-centered, Christian based perspective. In the year 2000, it was honored as the top volunteer organization in New York City from a pool of 4,000 nominees.

During an interview with Cliff Simmons, the Executive Director, he stated that the program presently has about 150 young people as mentees and 38 volunteers as mentors. They meet every Saturday for a session, but there is also one-on-one mentoring as needed. They are faith-based and the organization is operated in a very structured business-like way, like the average business in the secular world. Because it is a corporation, all potential mentors must be subjected to a background investigation. They are consistently getting referrals from the community and they have a great success rate. Many of their students go on to further their education, build skills, and pursue early career opportunities, and they don't resort to drugs. Many are becoming productive citizens in society. One of their strategies is to bring in successful African-American men and women to share their life stories, and inform them of career opportunities. This

³⁵ Valencia Joseph, "Clifford B. Simmons," The Blue Nile Passage, <http://www.blunilepassage.org/sub-page-cliff-bio.htm> (accessed December 6, 2008).

is also one of the primary components of Butler Mentoring Program. It has been proven that listening to successful life stories of African-American women and men greatly impacts the lives of young boys and girls.

Butler Mentoring Program does not foresee becoming a Corporation in the near future, but this does not preclude the possibility long term. Blue Nile was enlightening to me because we share many of the same ideologies and goals.

What Have We Learned About African American Females And Mentoring Programs?

Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, PhD provides a profound study on group mentoring with urban African-American female adolescents. I was impressed by this great wealth of information as it relates to the core of Butler's mentoring program and others in the Metropolitan area, specifically with the focus group, African-American adolescent females.

Nobles states that educators, school counselors, and others must begin to develop interventions that are specifically geared towards the needs of these adolescent females. The number of African-American adolescents who are actually experiencing teenage pregnancy, suicide, depression, and delinquent behaviors is increasing. The excerpt below will provide a specific approach that integrates African-American case studies about counseling and mentoring. This presentation gives an Afrocentric worldview that merges mentoring and group counseling to help these girls with life problems.³⁶

The structure and format of the studies and approach:

³⁶ W.W. Nobles, *African Philosophy: Foundations of Black Psychology* (Berkeley, California: Cobb & Henry, 1991), 47-63.

The approach introduced in this article is designed for African adolescent females ages (12-18) that are experiencing emotional, behavioral, and academic concerns and is intended for use in public schools. The approach has two components: (a) a group-counseling component and (b) a mentoring component. The group-counseling component consists of weekly group sessions (at least an hour) with African-American group counselors who are trained, certified and/or licensed to provide such services monthly for cultural, educational, volunteer-oriented, and /or recreational outings. The mentors attend the group counseling sessions, when applicable, and discuss issues pertinent to African-American adolescent females.³⁷

The study shows that there are more studies being done now because of the increasing number of African-American adolescent females suffering from these problems. The studies show that urban African-American female adolescents are subject to more self-destructive behaviors than African-American males, who are involved in more serious criminal activities overall.³⁸ We must understand that these concerns actually occur where African-American women have been portrayed as poor and welfare dependent or as mothers of illegitimate, impoverished and delinquent children.³⁹

From years of experience working and ministering to African-American women I clearly see that because of the impinging forces that these females are subjected to sometimes they are placed in precarious situations that make them vulnerable to destructive behaviors. An adolescent female who is experiencing domestic violence in the home is frustrated, in pain and feels hopeless. Therefore this girl may unintentionally be led to negative behavior. Sometime the behavior may continue if there is no resolution. This is why there is great concern for this focus group especially by the

³⁷ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Prevention, *Mentoring: A Proven Delinquency Prevention Strategy* (Washington DC: Government Printing office, 1997).

³⁸ J.L. Rozie-Battle, *African American Adolescents In The Urban Community: Social Services Policy And Practice Interventions* (New York: Haworth Press, 2002).

church.

Molidar makes the following comment:

In the research literature, there has even been a growing concern regarding African American adolescent females and crime involvement. A recent report indicated that the crime rate for African American adolescent females has increased by 50% between 1968 and 1994. Gang involvement, among African American adolescent females, has also increased in the past two decades. Walker-Barnes and Mason (2001) suggested that African American girls turn to gangs for protection not only from other gangs but also from community violence and abusive families.⁴⁰

Many of the girls are being pulled into gangs in many urban communities. This is happening everywhere. Sometimes this happens in the best and most affluent communities. Teens faced with “at risk” problems again may be led to join gangs to gain a feeling of belonging. Sometimes I believe that they are actually crying out for help. These adolescent females are seeking attention from someone who will listen to them, who will give them suggestions and directions. But too often these individuals will lead them to a path of destruction. Gang involvement is prevalent in the Williamsbridge community and girls are getting involved just as much as boys. This is why we are so concerned about youth intervention for our girls. This is a risk factor.

Further information from the abstract indicates that African-American adolescent females are often stereotyped as being sexually promiscuous and devoid of any morals. They are not perceived as having positive attributes, as they go through the normal stages

³⁹ V. Coultas, “Black Adolescent Females and Self-Esteem,” *Gender and Education* 1 (1989): 283-294.

⁴⁰ C.E. Molidar, “Female Gang Members: A Profile of Aggression and Victimization,” *Social Work* 41 (1996): 251-257.

of development.⁴¹

Nobles calls this a false and bogus perception that they are labeled with. It serves as an unintentional stigma that African-American adolescent females face in their schools. This is why the issue of race and gender is such a critical issue for African-American female adolescents.⁴²

With all of the risk factors mentioned that these girls experience it is always very difficult for them and this is why they must have effective interventions in their lives so they can cope with these great challenges.

A group mentoring approach for working with the adolescents in hopes of diminishing the negative things the girls were involved in is offered and this approach was based on a group concept believing that the entire community is required and necessary in this approach as opposed to the one-on-one mentoring.⁴³

There is also belief that observations on mentoring by these girls collectively with professional women will have a great impact. Flaxman and Ascher believe that it is very difficult to match mentors and mentees and achieve positive trusting relationships, so they encourage group mentoring because natural mentoring will result from group mentoring.⁴⁴ While I agree with the two authors that mentoring will automatically result from group mentoring, I see a great advantage to one-on-one mentoring if the match is

⁴¹ D.P. Stephens and L.D. Phillips, "Freaks, Gold Diggers, Divas, And Dykes: The Socio-historical Development of Adolescent African American Women's Sexual Scripts," *Sexuality & Culture* 7 (2003): 3-49.

⁴² Nobles, *African Philosophy*, 47-63.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ C. Ascher and E. Flaxman, "Mentoring in Action: The Efforts of Programs in New York City," The Institute for Urban and Minority Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, April, 1992.

good. Based on Butler Mentoring Program, all of the matches were good in that the mentors/mentees shared a commonality in many of their interests, hobbies and things they enjoyed doing. All of this led to good relationships subsequently leading to the establishment of trusting relationships between mentor/mentee. Although there were many other factors that influenced their development, such as school vacations, the girls expressed positive impacts from their relationships and time spent with mentors.

The Education Trust further supports the need for intervention for the African-American adolescents in that they are not getting equitable education in the public schools. They state:

For instance, too few African-American students read or do mathematics at proficient levels. Twelve percent of African-American fourth graders reach proficient or advanced levels, while 61% have not been taught to read at the basic level (Center for Education Statistics [NCES] 2000). The same is true in mathematics. By the end of high school, African-American students have mathematical skills that are virtually the same as those of eighth grade White students (NCES, 2000). As such, it necessary for helping professionals (e.g., school counselors) and educators to develop some understanding of the socio-cultural context of the students with whom they are working.⁴⁵

It is very obvious that there is a desperate need for enhanced education and resources for the African-American female. All through history the female has had to struggle and deal with all of the big challenges that she has had to face. Illiteracy is one, which is an obstacle to her furthering her education, and getting a good job where she could become a productive citizen. So many of our adolescent females are still faced with teen pregnancy which is another problem that puts her back in her progress in transitioning to an holistic adult life. She is now faced with the responsibility of rearing a

⁴⁵ Education Trust, "African-American Achievement in America," Education Trust, www.edtrust.org/edTrust/achievement+in+America.htm (accessed January 29, 2008).

child and most times not having the finances to do so. She unfortunately has to go to the Public Assistance Agency and most of the times get stuck into what I call the “welfare syndrome”.

Many of our females end up going through the same cycle that their parents were subjected to and some never escape this cycle. It seems like the life style is just trickled down from generation to generation. We must make concerted efforts to help our African-American females understand their challenges and risks in accomplishing their dreams and actually engage them with the resources and opportunities that will help them to overcome these obstacles.

RESEARCH QUESTION #3

What impact can the synthesis of religion and family teachings have to relate to and bring healing to the problems of young female youth and ultimately aid in transforming the lives of the female?

This question will focus on the following specific issues: We will look at the position of religion (church) and family involvement and its impact upon solving the problems of young people inclusive of young females. The merging and enhancement of religion and family teachings may not eliminate the barriers that exist between parents and children, but can strengthen the relationship and bring transformation in their lives.

Spiritual development is the foundation of the Christian family in today’s society. Therefore the family must be an integral part of society and take part in its life through a strong spiritual foundation. The family is the first community that the female gets to know and where she may find her place. We know that females are impacted by

many things. It is clearly seen how girls are influenced by television, the internet, the school and their interactions with other people. The effects of these impressions are strong. Therefore it is very important for the church, leaders, teachers and others in the community to assist females in making their dreams become a reality. Mothers and females should remember that God has a purpose and a plan for every human being, which each individual has to discover and strive for.

The Holy family should be the model for every Christian family. The love and loyalty that Joseph, Mary and Jesus had for each other was cogent. This close relationship between Jesus (the Son), and Mary and Joseph (the parents) is a role model for humankind.

Christian education our children learn

As parents we should be thinking about training and teaching our children to be the people that God can use in His vineyard here on earth. We should be teaching God's Word to them, praying for them, encouraging them to pray, and above all, showing them the way to achieve a personal relationship with God.

Our Christian faith is a powerful and an influential force that can be successfully rooted in our children at an early age and their upbringing can be manifested upon that premise. This can be a beneficial effect upon the life of our youth. Simply, parental influence can impact the ideas and beliefs of their children.

Parents should be the first mentors of children. It would be great if every parent's life was reflective of the ideal role model that God desires; however, we know that life has all kinds of imperfections and people are not perfect.

I realize how important it is that we teach our children religious values because

children tend to emulate their parents. If we want them to follow our life style we must make concerted efforts to instill our values within them. If we are going to be good at this, if this is going to be effective, we must have strong Christian Education so that we can impart this to them. Studying the Bible has to be a disciplinary principle and habit. To teach God's Word, we must know it. There is no better way than to study it.

Look at what the Bible tells us, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6 KJV). This passage gives direction to parents concerning their children.

Unfortunately with the inordinate amount of child abuse cases throughout the world, parents are afraid to discipline or punish their children for fear of law enforcement getting involved. Parents are afraid to step into their children's space and children don't want their parents in their space. I, along with many others, am concerned about the reason for this concept and how we can rid parents and children of this feeling.

Myron Horst feels that all families in the church should be doing things with their teens. Teens must be a part of the life of the church and that means inclusiveness. When families and teens are doing things together community involvement comes to play.⁴⁶

The Bible says,

These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7 KJV). "

Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching" (Proverbs 1:8 KJV).

Parents have a great responsibility of laying the foundation and planting God's

⁴⁶ Myron Horst, "Preparing for the Future of the Church," Free House Church Resources, <http://www.freehousechurchresources.com/preparingfuture.php> (accessed February 24, 2007).

Word into the hearts and minds of our children. Parents need to be grounded in good theological knowledge so that they can effectively teach and educate their teens. Many believe that when children are reared in a strong Christian environment, they are more likely to deal with life issues better.

Parental Involvement

Parents can help in the upbringing of their children through studying God's Word so that they can provide the correct guidance and direction for their lives. Looking at the way Jesus Christ taught His disciples, we should try to follow that same theology in the upbringing of our children. We are all born into a world with sin. That is why we must teach them how to deal with the evils and social ills of the world. Without this they will not be able to avoid temptations and negative forces of the world and they will succumb to these evil forces.

One of the things that parents should be doing first is gaining the hearts of our children. Proverbs 23:26 says, "My son, give me your heart and let your eyes keep to my ways" (Proverbs 23:26 NIV). In order to make sure that we are the people that God has called us to be, we must make sure that we are striving to live Christ-like. We need to be telling our children about our personal relationship with God and they should hear us giving thanks to God for all of the blessings that God bestows upon us every day of our lives. Our children should see love expressed between spouses in the home. And above all we should be accompanying our children to the church and participating with them, getting involved in the ministries of the church.

Many people believe that family involvement is of *paramount significance* in the effective teaching and training of their children, inclusive of our focus group, young

females.

Eleanor Roosevelt stated in a publication that:

Education of parents, because so many parents, I find have lost their hold on their children. One reason for this is that they insist on laying down the law without allowing a free intellectual interchange of ideas between themselves and the younger generation. As we grow older we gain some wisdom, but we can take it for granted that our wisdom will be accepted by the younger generation. We have to be prepared to put our thinking across to them. We cannot simply expect them to say, "Our older people have had experience and they have proved to themselves certain things, therefore they are right." That isn't the way the best kind of young people think. They want to experience for themselves. I find they are perfectly willing to talk to older people, but they don't want to talk to older people who are shocked by their ideas, nor do they want to talk to older people who are not realistic.⁴⁷

Parental involvement is the best way to get most youth more involved and serious about their faith communities and what goes on in their communities. In doing this parents have to focus more on strengthening their own religious and spiritual lives if they are going to take part in this process.

Another important way religious congregations may better engage youth is through simple, ordinary adult relationships with teenagers. Adults other than family members and youth ministers could be intentionally encouraged to make better efforts to establish relationships.⁴⁸

In order for parents to keep the hearts of their teens united with them they must have a close relationship with them. God supports this theology as is seen in Malachi 4:6, "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:6 NIV).

⁴⁷ Eleanor Roosevelt, "Facing The Problems of Youth," *Selected Writings of Eleanor Roosevelt*, <http://newdeal.feri.org/er/er21.htm> (accessed May 10, 2009).

⁴⁸ Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 346.

Coty Pinckney in a sermon about family relationships describes a Godly Home. He states that the relationship of family and children is grounded in Biblical principles.

The Apostle Paul states in Ephesians

Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Honor our father and mother which is the first commandment with a promise – that it may go well with you and that you many enjoy long life on the earth. Fathers, do not exasperate our children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:1-4 NIV).

Coty further states that we all know that children will be defiant and disobey us and sometimes fathers will have higher expectations for our children and become frustrated when they don't meet our expectations. Fathers may become reactionary. We must remember that God requires three things from children: to be obedient, to honor their parents, and to adhere to instructions of discipline.⁴⁹

When we talk about giving instructions, we must know that this is not a responsibility solely of the church but the parents too. This is a collaborative effort of the church and the parents. Parents have the first responsibility in guiding their children. Then parents must train and discipline their children for the sake of the children, not because they may have experienced hurt. The important thing is that children must know that they are loved and by disciplining them we let them know that defiant and negative behaviors will not be tolerated. Disciplining is to help them in building their character.

Coty says that the answer to the inordinate amount of difficult problems that American families face today is that every family must know Christ, and if we do, Christ will change our hearts so that we will be led to understand and follow the Word of God. We will be able to value the Word, and be more concerned about helping others more

⁴⁹ Coty Pinckney, "What Does the Bible Say About Family Relationships?" The Expository, <http://www.expository.org/family.htm> (accessed November 30, 2007).

than ourselves. What is so significant is that we must make concerted efforts to place the need of our children or family members above our own needs.⁵⁰

With respect to **church and community involvement**, Melinda Lundquist Denton and Christian Smith provide similar solutions to the problems of our girls and boys today. They too agree that the issues facing our youth are very complex and diverse; however, they agree that *the communities* need to do more in discerning and understanding the issues of teens. They should be more concerned about how difficult it is for teens living in a world with serious problems. They need to focus less on mundane things like the cultural trends and literature on the bookshelves. Instead they need to be doing more analytical planning for intervention initiatives and programs for working with teens in ways that they can more relate to. It is felt that parents, pastors, ministers, religious educators, and congregational leaders concerned with youth need simply to better engage and challenge the youth to strengthen their faith for greater growth in their lives.

Exploring the **church and spiritual involvement**, Myron Horst speaks about the spiritual education of our youth. He feels that leaders of the church should be making more concerted efforts in providing strong Christian education to our youth. We are just not meeting the expectations that God has planned for us and our children. He feels that the position of the church is not strong. A survey conducted by Barna Research Group showed the same statistics (9%) were found between born again believing teens and non-religious teens regarding moral truths. It says we must give our children the directives and training that they need to live this Christian life. They should know that they can

⁵⁰ Coty Pinckney, "What Does the Bible Say About Family Relationships."

fulfill the plans of God for their life. This; however, means that we as parents and Christian leaders have to make certain changes in our lives to meet the plans and expectations of God and we cannot expect changes in the lives of our children if we continue to do the same things in our everyday lives. Horst says that is clear that everyone has their own opinion of the best method for raising children. We know that some of these opinions are excellent, some good and some poor. We should also understand that it is not just accepting the basis of the majority; it is about meeting God's expectations.⁵¹

I was in a state of quandary after reading Horst's comments on Proverb 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6 NIV). This passage gives directions to parents on how God wants us to deal with our children. Horst says that when we do not see the results implied by this scripture, we should not start questioning God, because God does not make a mistake, but we humans do. Therefore we know that we made a mistake somewhere in our dealing with our children.⁵² I was taken aback by Horst's view because I see the implication here to mean that if parents raise their children absolutely as God has commanded the children will literally not go astray from the teaching and training of God. I have ambivalent feelings about this, because I believe that sometimes no matter how careful and meticulous parents are in raising their children (giving all of the love, care, spending exorbitant amounts of quality time with children), they can take on a destructive life style which may take a long and protracted time for deliverance. I believe that the wrong choices that children make in life can lead them to destructive life styles and it is not

⁵¹ Nobles, 47-63.

always because of any deficiency in the way the parents raised them.

Church Involvement

A panel of researchers analyzed years of research done on children including medical reports, and came to the following conclusions:

Young people who are religious are better off in significant ways than their secular peers. They are less likely than non-believers to smoke and drink and more likely to eat well; less likely to commit crimes and more likely to wear seat belts; less likely to be depressed and more likely to be satisfied with their families and school. Religion has a unique net effect on adolescents above and beyond factors like race, parental education, and family income. Poor children who are religious will do better than poor children who are not religious, and in some cases better than nonreligious middle-class children... Too often, youth organizations try to foster virtue by appealing to self-interest. These programs don't seem to realize that adolescents are also looking for something bigger than themselves.⁵³

In conclusion, as parents we must continue to be involved in the lives of our children so that we can help in shaping their belief system. It is therefore very important that we try to be as Christ-like as possible. Young people are aware of how important it is having Christian parents. That is the foundation of the good, decent life that God condones. They also know that they should have respect for the principles imposed by their parents. Parents must convince them that they must be able to make right choices in their lives because we know that they may be impacted somehow by the forces in the secular world.

Parents and young females must be convinced that God has a purpose and a plan for every human being, but they have to strive for it. They have to therefore find out what that plan is and they can do it by searching and remaining open to God speaking to

⁵² Horst, "Preparing for the Future of the Church."

⁵³ Laura Sessions Stepp, "An Inspired Strategy: Is Religion a Tonic for Kids? You Better Believe It, Say Teens and Scholars," *The Washington Post*, March 21, 2004.

their hearts.

I express this as my

“Personal Mentoring Motto”

I can accomplish all that God has planned for me

I will only know God’s plan when I reach out and seek it

I will reach the plateau if I continue to pursue my dream

I will be as much as I can dream

I will never give up as long as there is hope

Parents must be convinced that the key issue for young females is *parents not understanding youth and youth not understanding parents*. All of the literature I read shows that more parent-child and church involvement will foster better relationships, children having better attitudes, behavior, skill building and subsequently they will be better able cope with their problems. They will have transformed lives and ultimately will be better individuals in the world.

CHAPTER 6

MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

The Members of the Site Team:

1. Rev. St. Clair, Pastor
2. Rev. Estella Abel
3. Wendy Holness
4. Ivy Mignott
5. Haywood Stephney
6. William Bellajambe
7. Lynette Hunkins

The following is a summary of my process and assessment with the Site Team. The entire Site Team was supportive of me through out this process. Through meetings and intense dialogues each one of them expressed and demonstrated how grateful they were to be part of this team. They helped in analyzing the need, affirmed the purpose and provided directions and guidance throughout the entire process of the demonstration project. This great, unprecedented initiative created excitement for Butler Memorial United Methodist Church. The church has also never had a doctoral candidate.

The Site Team and the congregation were excited to see a pivotal move in the need for growth in youth intervention at Butler Church. It was clearly seen that the church is very concerned about exploring and tapping into all sources and initiatives that

will address the needs of youth.

The Site Team was given very concise information on their position as a Site Team for the doctoral program. They all agreed that they wanted to be a part of the process and would make concerted efforts in doing what was required to support me. The duties of the Site Team were stated in detail by reviewing the guidelines as set forth by New York Theological Seminary. All questions were discussed for clarification

On 10/30/2007, the Site Team and I met for the second time to revisit the competencies per my request. After further discussions with my former mentor, Dr. Nancy Fields, it was emphasized that the competencies chosen to be developed must be those that the Site Team genuinely felt that I need improvement and growth in and should also be competencies where growth can be clearly seen and measured as I pursued the implementation of the project. Members of my team present at the meeting included: Rev. Estella Abel, the Deacon of Butler Church who has two Master degrees, Master of Science and Master of Education. Wendy Holness, who has a Master Degree in Social Work, and is a certified Clinical Social Worker and the Coordinator of the Youth Council at Butler Church. Haywood Stephney Jr., who has a Bachelor of Science Degree, and is the Co-Chairperson of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee. Ivy Mignott, who has a Bachelor Degree in English and is Chairperson of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee. Lynette Hunkins, who has a Bachelor Degree in Education and is an active leader of the church.

I coordinated the meeting and stated the purpose of the meeting. I began with a discussion on the challenge statement. The challenge statement was reviewed by all for reflections and discussion. The Site Team were satisfied with the challenges stipulated;

however, some of the members stated that the need for more parental involvement may be difficult to achieve because of the cultural trend and belief system ingrained within the minds and hearts of the parishioners. It was indicated that many of the parishioners might not be too thrilled with having a great amount of involvement with their teens. However, it was decided and agreed upon by the Site Team to maintain parental involvement in the challenge statement. They felt that this is an issue that needs to be addressed and if achieved would have a great impact upon the African-American families of Butler Church and the Williamsbridge community.

The Site Team revisited the previously chosen competencies assigned to the candidate to develop, which were: Spiritual Leader, Worship Leader, and Prophetic Agent. After more critical thinking, they agreed that in view of my position with this project, these competencies would not be the best competencies to measure my growth as a Minister, Lay Leader, and Lay Speaker in the United Methodist Denomination. They reviewed all of the competencies and decided that the two competencies that I need growth and development in which could be demonstrated and measured are Administrator and Counselor.

Administrator

With respect to Administrator, it was stated that while it is clearly seen that I have substantial administrative skills that are required for a strong administrator, with the magnitude of this big project, the competency of administrator needs to be developed. They felt that the administrator competency can be a challenge for me specifically in the areas of:

1. Showing clarity and succinctness in defining and analyzing problems

2. Establishing concrete and realistic goals
3. Developing strategies to achieve identified goals
4. Correctly identifying the appropriate evaluative tools to measure and quantify the outcome of the project

During the first meeting with the Site Team on February 8, 2008, the Site Team stated emphatically that they wanted to see how I would design this Christian Mentoring model for the girls of the Butler Church and the community of Williamsbridge. I gave a sketch and an overall look at the goals and plans. I also informed them that I would be researching other models. They wanted to see improvements in the four areas listed above as a challenge for me, my overall scope and the final design that would meet their expectations. The Site Team made notations of where they wanted to see improvements. I made notations in my personal log book on their concerns. On regular Saturday monthly sessions, the Site Team spoke to mentors and parents to see if they fully understood the dynamics of the program as imparted by me.

Several meetings were conducted with the Site Team for discussions on the design for the Butler Christian Mentoring program: Feb. 24, 2008, March 14, 2008, April 18, 2008 and May 21, 2008. I presented updated outlines of the plan and skeletal drafts for review. As the Site Team observed and asked questions, I listened, did some critical thinking and gave further information on my plans. I also made modifications from their input. The Site Team conferred and made it clear that they were not yet satisfied with the proposed model; however, they knew it was early in the program and they were aware that I had an astronomical amount of work to do. They stated that they had doubts as to how I would be able to design this Christian Mentoring project with a finished product in

a short time frame and manage this operation with 20 mentors and 20 mentees. They offered their services. I had not met the expectations and satisfaction of the Site Team yet. I began to believe that the Site Team did not understand all of the ramifications that would be involved in this most tedious process. This project entailed an inordinate amount of work; actually it was a daily job consistently utilizing the computer and on-line websites. I continued my work on the manual in conjunction with daily operation of the program and at the same time documenting every thing that I did which was placed in manuals. At each meeting the Site Team saw updated drafts of the manual. They continued to give input on items they thought needed modification. By May 30, 2008, I had still not met their expectations. They wanted to see a finished product. I still did not have a finished mentoring manual with procedures and guidelines for both mentors and mentees to refer to. Also in the continued discussions held during this period (February - June) was securing the most effective evaluative tools for this program. There was some skepticism as to the exact tool to utilize. The Site Team was not satisfied with my initial survey tool, which was basically a yes/no questionnaire. They felt that I should use an evaluative tool where the mentees answers would be on a scale. My second program director Wendy Holness was very emphatic about this. She emphasized that she had been looking at evaluative tools for many years since she became a Youth Counselor at Butler Church and was familiar with the measuring device and how it could quantify programs. I agreed with the Site Team and decided to use this tool. Further discussions were held on the tool for this unique group of individuals in a church setting, taking into consideration their ethnicity, cultural background and that this was an unprecedented initiative at Butler Church. By June 1, 2008 our decision upon the most effective tools

was official. These evaluative tools are accessible in the daily activity manuals. The Site Team was tremendously satisfied with my improvement through use of my innovative and intuitive skills and also the input of the Site Team in meeting the challenges and most importantly the model designed for the mentoring program. The Butler Mentoring Manual was designed and distributed to all 20 mentors, 20 mentees, seven Site Team members and six participants by June 20, 2008. There were twelve evaluative tools designed to measure the program that are a part of the operational program.

During the June 6, 2008 meeting, the Site Team saw the finished model. It was clearly expressed by the entire Site Team that from February to June 2008, there was great improvement in my demonstration of clarity and succinctness in explaining the entire scope of the program and its components seen in the Butler Mentoring Manual. They indicated that at this time tremendous:

1. Improvement had been achieved through my ability to establish and analyze clearly defined goals for the demonstration project that were realistic and achievable.
2. Improvements had been seen in my skills in bringing this model together through developing strategies to achieve identifiable goals.
3. Improvements had been seen in my ability to devise the effective procedures, guidelines and confidentiality rules for the Williamsbridge community young females in a Christian setting. Most importantly, they cited improvements in the operational forms that would be used for problematic situations.

They further cited that improvement in the area of clarity could be seen in all of my monthly session presentations, and contact with the Site Team, the mentors, participants and others. Many areas of improvement stated by the Site Team are clearly

documented in The Butler Mentoring Manual that incorporates the procedures and guidelines of the Butler Christian Mentoring Program.

The Site Team did not see much deficiency in my organizational skills and actual work. This too, is accessible and documented in the 20 folders kept for mentors and 20 folders for the 20 mentees. Included in the folders are all pertinent information on each; signature of agreement to participate, understanding of the program, and critical issues such as confidentiality, etc. All information on operational functions was forwarded to the Site Team to maintain in their respective folders for response when needed. There are times that I tend to gather large amounts of information for structured organizational purposes, but do have difficulties in actually integrating them. This is an area of administration that I am trying to improve.

The Site Team stated on June 20, 2008 that they could see progress with goal number three; my ability and strategy in identifying the goals appropriate for the program. This was seen through my on-going strategy of forwarding to the Site Team updates on the contacts with mentors for suggestions and input. All of this correspondence, contacts and responses are documented in the 6 manuals. Also included are all reported and follow-up actions by mentors/mentees to determine whether my actions and directives were appropriate. The Site Team responded to all directives and actions I relayed to them via email. There were many case scenarios that I forwarded for response request. To name a few: One of the mentees had a serious academic problem (65 GPA) and it was obvious that she needed serious educational intervention. The mentor brought it to my attention. I discussed academic help for the mentee with the mother. She indicated that she was quite aware of this problem that her daughter was

facing but could not afford help due to the lack of financial assistance. I explained to her that the mentoring program was designed to help the mentee. I offered her assistance, which could be given by Rev. Abel, educator par excellence who agreed to provide help to the mentee. A schedule was done and assistance was provided to the mentee; however, other domestic issues were at play with the family and she only received two sessions. Her evaluation by Rev. Abel indicated that she is very far behind in her academic level and needed serious help. The mother however had reservations about continuous tutorial assistance. The mother expressed that she felt that this was a burden for Rev. Abel. I assured her that it was not; however, she refused additional tutoring. Rev. Abel did give the mother a clear assessment of the mentee's academic level and status and suggested that she seek educational tutorial help. The entire Site Team was made aware of this situation and during the next meeting the general consensus was that we tried to help but could not force the mother. The entire Site Team agreed that the directive and actions that I took were appropriate and good. The Site Team complimented me on this effort and stated that this was truly a great moment in which I had addressed another challenge of the project (academic problems). This is a challenge that the mother and mentee will have to address further in hopes that they will get some help so that the mentee can be successful in her educational endeavor and become a productive young lady in society

Counselor

With respect to the competency of Counselor, the Site Team all agreed that while I showed the characteristics of honesty, and sincere concern for youth, there was opportunity for further development of my competency through the proposed

demonstration project as a Minister, Lay Leader, and Lay Speaker. Special emphasis was given and discussed about the competency of Counselor. Some of the Site Team cited that I clearly showed desire and effort in establishing relationships that was clearly seen in my position as a Church School Teacher, supporter of youth initiatives, and visible relationships with other parishioners in the congregation. However, they would like to see growth in:

- Establishing stronger relationships with the teens in the congregation but especially non-members (those in the community), who may not have good support systems in their families. They felt that this project will afford me the ability to establish strong adult /teen bonds.
- Becoming more accessible and approachable to the teen girls. The Site Team emphasized that with the nature and purpose of this mentoring program, I must be able to relate to these girls and they must be able to see it and feel it. Notwithstanding that my educational level, stature, age, communication style, and language was much higher than the girls, I must be able to get these girls to understand and be receptive to me in all respects.

It was suggested that I try to use the contemporary language or teens-talk they use, so that they would be comfortable in interacting with me. It was also suggested that I make concerted efforts in my understanding of contemporary issues affecting teens, their trends, and use of their teen-talk language. The Site Team felt that my improvement working on these items through interacting with the teens would maximize the impact of intervention and empower them to be the best that we could. It was also suggested that

I attend the Friday Night Ministry more frequently to gain familiarity with all of

the teens, those who are members as well as the non-members of the Williamsbridge community who frequent the Friday night ministry. They said this would help me to keep abreast of the expressed concerns of teens and the coordinated efforts by the youth organization. As Lay Leader I could have more input in addressing some of their concerns. They felt that a more hands-on approach would afford me an opportunity to build trust, distinguish the concerns of the teen girls and access the spiritual doctrines all ready ingrained in them.

When the program began in March I did not personally know most of the girls, therefore there were no established relationships. The girls knew me as the Lay leader, second-in-charge of the operation at Butler Church. I did not react to the girls frequently, only during Church School or when I had gatherings to make announcements about scholarships.

During recruitment for the program, I began to speak and interact more with the young females. Three of the mentees were in my Sunday Church School Class so I knew them and was familiar with their personality. Meeting the girls on the kick-off day was exciting and I immediately began to speak and interact with them. I tried to get a good understanding of their personality through question and answer periods. I pursued this effort through active conversations with the girls about general things concerning their interests and hobbies.

During meetings with the Site Team in April, they addressed my progress in this competency and stated that they saw improvements in my relationship with the mentees (more verbal interactions were seen). They did state that they expected much more improvement as I continued with the mentoring program. I continued in communicating

and interacting with the teens to develop relationships because this was the core of acquiring a successful mentoring program. *Trusting relationships* are the core to good mentoring.

On the May 23, 2008, meeting with the Site Team, this competency was again addressed and the Site Team cited continued progress by me in the competency. They further indicated that they saw progress in my developing relationships with the teens. They stated that my mentor/mentee relationships and the overall reactions seen from the mentees during monthly sessions and during Sunday services showed definite progression of the mentor/mentee bond through their verbal expressions, demeanor and actions by both the mentees and myself.

The Site Team acknowledged that this development of relationships could be seen during the monthly sessions as I played an important role in making sure that the girls felt comfortable with the presenters. They said that my comments were critical especially during the introduction and post-message of presenters. The Site Team stated that they saw improvements and stated that my verbal input had a profound impact upon the girls with the presenters.

It was clearly seen that there was progression and improvement in my being accessible to the girls. At each consecutive session strong interactions were seen through the many questions posed by the girls. They asked questions like: When are we going to the movies? Are we attending other functions? When is the next session? Are we going to any off Broadway shows? I was always there for them with an answer. There was a business meeting after each monthly session. During this time the mentees were encouraged to ask questions or discuss any topic of their concern. I engaged the girls in

conversations about things they were interested in: sports, hobbies, problems, etc., using the teen-talk language as much as possible. I could see that they felt more comfortable talking with me and being in dialogue as I related to them. We spoke about the contemporary trends of today's girls: hip-hop, fashions, culture and their relationships with boys. I tried to relate to these girls with the understanding that all of these issues were a part of living as a teen girl in today's world. The girls were very receptive and seemed to be very surprised that I was speaking to them along these lines. Some of the younger girls (aged 12 and 13) were not as vocal as the older teens on some of the topics like hip-hop and fashions.

At the June 2008 Site Team meeting, a discussion was held on my experience with the girls at Friday Night Ministry. Wendy Holness and William Belajambe cited that they saw improvement in my bond with all of the youth of the Friday Night Ministry. They cited a receptive aura by the girls and boys with my presence and interests which was expressed by some of the youth (girls and boys). They cited that the non-member participants at Friday Night were not vocal to them about my presence. They did mention that this was expected because the non-member participants' interest at Friday Night Ministry was generally different from the members. Many of them were only interested in having a place where they could go and socialize with other youths. They did not show a great interest in career goals, skills building and other cultural affairs or the purpose for the Friday Night Ministry.

I know that the Butler Mentoring Program cannot answer all of the innermost problems and concerns for these girls, but I believe that this Christian mentoring model can positively impact and transform the lives of these girls in some way or the other.

Before establishing a special bond with each of the girls, I was very limited to what I knew of them, but as I interacted and bonded with them I became very involved in their personal lives. Through the mentor, information on the girls was supplied on their mentee interest survey and through my dialogues with each one of them. I also had a mini-biography of each one of them. I knew much about them, their challenges, problems and what made them tick.

I became concerned about the welfare and happiness of each one, and what was needed to help each one to develop all of their potential. I saw myself devoting an inordinate amount of time in trying to figure out how each mentor could be the best in helping their mentee. While I did not want to create any interruption in the mentor/mentee relationship, I wanted to make sure that each mentee receive the best mentoring possible. I conferred with each mentor to find out where they were with establishing a relationship with their mentee. While I allowed each mentor to utilize their mentoring skills and techniques, I gave suggestions when needed and there were times that I had to help mentors in their bond by speaking to the parents or the mentee. There were some cases in which I actually became an invisible second mentor. I have grown into this mentoring mode as if it was a Divine calling upon my life. I love being a mentor. I get so much gratification from this entire mentoring process and the impact that I see that this mentoring process has had on the girls of Williamsbridge community.

I have declared to be a mentor for a mentee for life. I am so gratified spending time with my mentee. When I see how happy she is in having a relationship with me (a stranger), it is just profound. I know that there is another force intervening in this entire process. I do believe that mentoring is in God's plan for humankind. I believe that this is

a calling for my life. I not only see it, but I feel it.

I have always liked giving, but through this experience I understand even more that true giving is more profound and impacts the lives of others when it comes solely from the heart. While I would like to see the greatest outcomes from this mentoring experience, my true joy is that I could give my total self, my experience, my expertise and my gifts to help these young ladies have better lives.

The Site Team made comments at the monthly operational meetings and following most of the monthly sessions. They and the mentees gave evaluations on the presenters so that I would have a perception of the presenters from their viewpoint. They conferred with me on their perspective of the presenters and the relationship that they viewed.

During the June 27, 2008 meeting, the Site Team was ecstatic at the improvement seen in my interactions and quickly acquired relationships with the girls. They confirmed that it was quite visible through my interactions, speaking and mingling with the girls that relationships had begun. They cited that in my interactions with the girls one could see that I was trying to find myself with them. I was still more rigid as if I were teaching a course to these young females; however, as I interacted and gained relationships with them, I myself became more relaxed and confident as well as the girls and relationships developed. I began to use a lot of their teen language as opposed to my intellectual rhetoric. I find myself now using a lot of their teen language that I feel comfortable with.

Notwithstanding this great mesh with the girls, I have still been able to maintain the respect that they have demonstrated for me and the love that they have employed. Many of the girls have told me, "Mrs. White, you are so nice". This statement brought

tears to my eyes, because I am not nice because it is the right thing to do, but because I am intrinsically nice to all people.

Wendy Holness, second program coordinator and coordinator for the Friday Night Ministry, cited especially that the bond that I had quickly achieved with the mentees was great, especially given the inordinate amount of time that I was engaged in operating the mentoring program as director.

The other Site Team members expressed that they too saw substantial improvement in my relationships with the girls. They encouraged me to continue as they felt that by the end of the program I would have grown even more in this competency. I continued to attend Friday night ministry and in addition I made concerted efforts to reach out to other non-member mentees. Establishing relationships with these girls and their parents and guardians was a necessity. The Site Team expressed that they noticed a tremendous growth in my ability to gain relationships and good rapport with the parents and guardians through dialogues.

I continued to strengthen my relationship with two of the girls in the mentoring class who are also in my Church school class through Biblical discussions and other topics. Before each Sunday service, I frequented the social hall and spoke and mingled with the girls, conversing and being a part of their teen group. There were many things we conversed about. Since one-on-one mentoring did not begin until June, while the children were out of school, I still asked them questions relating to their school attendance because I wanted to analyze their educational environment and how they fit into that environment. I asked many questions, to name a few: what did they like most about school? What did they dislike most? What were some of the problems they were

facing in and out of school? I specifically asked them questions about their peers and peer pressure, if any. Many of the girls stated that there will always be peer pressure, but it is up to the individual as to how they allow peers to impact them. Almost all of them stated that they are at sometimes impacted by peers; however, most of the time they act on their own belief system. The Site Team stated that they could see my improvement in this competency. They saw the girls move from not feeling as comfortable in the beginning of the program to after nine months of interacting become comfortable in dialogue with me personally and collectively. The Site Team and mentors saw and expressed this at the site and at outside tours. The Site Team states that the mentees showed a move from apprehension of the entire process to a sense of trust and loving care for me and the mentors.

By the end of the program in November, and after two outings to the movies with 20 girls, the Site Team stated that they felt that I have an innate passion for these girls and they see this not only as an improvement for me but a transformation in my life. The girls expressed to them how much fun they had during the movie trips with me and their feelings about me as a Director. At the end of the program Wendy Holness said to me, “Sister White, you were phenomenal and we are thankful to God for you”. Rev. Abel said, “This is a great program for these girls and we must continue with it at Butler Church and try to get it incorporated into as many churches as possible because all children have problems, even those from Christian families”. The Site Team stated that I have improved tremendously in terms of establishing a relationship with at least 19 of the mentees and the other identified areas of improvement needed as a Counselor.

MY JOURNEY

Eight years ago I began a journey in my life that led to studies at New York Theological Seminary. The beginning of this process was due to my deep-seated faith that God had called me to be a minister. I knew that it would be a hard journey because life naturally employs challenges that we sometimes don't understand. But because of our love for the Lord and determination to fulfill God's plan for our lives, we continue to forge towards the goals and dreams of our life. This journey has allowed me to see how operable God is in my life and in the life of humankind. I have always been a believer and traveling this road has allowed me to see how worldly forces can adversely affect the lives of people.

Without the strong unconditional love for God and humankind, it is easy to be pulled away from the mission that Christ has left for us to follow. God left two laws for us to follow:

The most important one," answered Jesus, "Is this: Hear, O Israel, the Lord Our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord Our God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these". (Mark 12: 29-30 NIV)

Jesus knew that *Love* is the only thing that would overshadow all of the obstacles and thorns that life would bring. He knew that it would take unconditional love for people to foster the attitude and train others to go out and make disciples for carrying out the work of God in this world.

As we look at the world today, we see an institutionalized world operated by a structured venue. Everything is structured, which is good but sometimes in this organized setting (the world) circumstances will occur that will require the act of love to

take precedence over any of life's situations. We see why Christ said we must love each other. Love is the strongest force this world could offer.

I understand that we will never understand the miraculous acts of Christ. Christ said,

For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord, As the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8 NIV).

What I experienced was an inordinate amount of obstacles and controversies which at times I thought would have abrogated this sacred process that I had undertaken. But I never gave up; I kept the faith and forged on to my dream. I was determined to walk in closeness with God, having compassion and love for every one. Enduring all of my challenges through Christ's direction, I gained a new venue that will have an everlasting impact upon life forever. This would become a new milestone and enhancement in my spiritual and social growth.

When I initiated the Mentoring program, I knew that I had the managerial skills to operate it; I also knew that God would lead and direct my path. I was also aware of the expected challenges, but I never knew that God would use this program to bring about a transformation in my life as it has. Seeing 20 girls and 20 women come together and establish relationships, share life stories, and participate in cultural activities together was awesome. What was most interesting was the happiness and joy they shared together. The beginning of trusting relationships was the core of this process. I saw love, joy, excitement and confidence with both mentors and mentees. Both mentors and mentees have overtly expressed how much their lives have been impacted by this great program and experience.

I have gained three life-long mentees that I love and am committed to devote my time and life experiences to, which I consider gifts to promote and help them in transitioning to women.

I want to live the life of Naomi, a virtuous woman, so that I may impact them as Naomi impacted the life of Ruth.

I thank God for leading me and I know that God will continue to direct me so that I may fulfill *all* of His plans for my life.

Ministerial Competency Report by the Site Team

Counseling:

Sister White at the beginning of this project was unfamiliar with the developmental tasks of adolescents and quiet uncertain about her ability to develop a connection with this age group. She read articles and papers related to youth development and increased her understanding of the developmental tasks of teens and strategies to effectively communicate with them. This is a skill she did not have at the beginning of this project. At the beginning of this project Sister White did not have any formal experience in mentoring. During this project, Sister White researched other mentoring program models, interviewed directors of other initiatives in NYC, and completed a mentoring training to ensure she had a solid concept of what effective mentoring entailed. This training and outreach to other mentoring programs increased her confidence and her ability to connect with youth in a way she was previously unable to.

During the recruitment phase, one mentee specifically asked, “not to be paired with an old mentor who wouldn’t understand her”. Sister White was very sensitive and

hurt by this youth's response initially. She learned not to personalize and to maintain an emotional distance. Over time and upon the advisement of Site Team members, she was able to take this youth's request into consideration and re-assigned her to a younger mentor.

Sister White had little to no experience facilitating groups with teens when this project commenced. The teens were easily distracted and appeared disinterested with workshops initially. Sister White learned over the course of this project to break up presentations/workshops with activities and encouraged more participation and feedback from the youth during workshops to keep them engaged. She also made a noticeable adjustment in her use of more simple, age appropriate language when speaking to the youth. Sister White learned to use ice breakers, music, and food to engage the youth. She allowed natural group leaders to arise and peer support was fostered within the group. These are group of skills she did not have at the beginning of this project.

Administration:

In the beginning of the project Sister White lacked proficiency with the internet and computers. Throughout the project she became more comfortable using email and text messages to communicate with the mentees and volunteer pool. Her growth in this area enabled her to manage her time better and keep a history of all communication.

Sister White hoped to implement program as initially proposed and was fairly inflexible when faced with constraints of both budget and time. Over the course of the project she learned to reevaluate goals and became more flexible. Although she was able to achieve a great deal in six months, amendments to her original plans were unavoidable. Unforeseen interruptions included participation of youth and adult volunteers were

affected by summer vacation, requirements of work and school. She also learned reprioritizing, or modifying original plan did not mean failure but was sometimes necessary.

The Site Team also noticed that Sister White had a difficult time with the administrative function of delegating responsibilities and clarifying roles. Sis White continues to work to gain further proficiency in this area. We attribute the difficulty she had delegating responsibilities to the fact that the pool of mentors and ad hoc/ Site Team members are very busy in community, church, and professional endeavors and she was sensitive to their existing workload. She was at times overextended and had some difficulty maintaining work/ life balance as a result. After the summer months, Sister White began to delegate tasks and held a meeting to clarify roles of volunteers. She wrote an email requesting additional support from Site Team and Mentors. This request was issued to prevent burnout, undue stress, and compromised health. Tasks such as catering, space planning for workshops, the distribution and collection of forms/ surveys, chaperoning of field trips, research for grants/ funding, production of journals/ programs, and a few other tasks were delegated to members of Site Team, parents, and mentors while Sister White provided oversight.

In the Site Team's deliberations the areas above were reviewed and evaluated. Many of the public mentoring sessions were attended by members of the Site Team and the Team reviewed all administrative decisions and structures. In the opinion of the Site Team Sister Cassandra White met the expectations of the Team and in each of the areas she has shown growth and competence. Her overall evaluation from the Team would be

- competent in administration

- competent in counseling

The Team is pleased with Sister White's progress and has every expectation that her project will eventually meet the requirements of the doctorate program at New York Theological Seminary.

Respectfully,

The Site Team

APPENDIXES

**APPENDIX A:
Surveys & Forms**

THE INITIAL MENTEE SURVEY OF BUTLER MENTORING

Name: _____ Ethnicity: _____

Date: _____

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I'm going to start by asking you some general questions.

1. What grade are you in? _____
2. What is your birth date? _____ So you're _____ years old.
3. Who do you live with? (list) _____

List siblings: Brother/sister	Age	lives with you?
_____	_____	Y/N
_____	_____	Y/N
_____	_____	Y/N

If you don't live with both parents, could you explain why?

Parents divorced, live with: Mom Dad (circle one).

Parent in jail, live with: Mom Dad (circle one).

Parents separated, live with: Mom Dad (circle one).

Another Situation (please specify)

Death of _____ (please specify),

live with: Mom Dad (circle one)

Parents never married, live with: Mom Dad (circle one).

5. How often have you moved in your life? (circle one).

Never

Once or twice

3-5 times

More than 5 times

For questions 6-10, please answer by writing Yes or No in the space provided.

6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

9. I certainly feel useless at times.

10. At times I think I am no good at all.

ETHNIC PRIDE

I want you to read some different statements, but first I'd like to ask you a question. What word would you use to describe your ethnic or racial group?

OK, so for these questions, whenever I say "ethnic group" I mean _____.

I'd like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with each statement by using the scale described below.

1	2	3	4
Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Answering with the number 1 means you strongly agree, while the number 4 would mean you strongly disagree with the statement.

1. I am happy that I am (ethnic group stated above). _____
2. I feel little sense of belonging to my own ethnic group. _____
3. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments. _____
4. I feel little attachment towards my own ethnic group. _____
5. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background. _____

PEER ATTACHMENT

These questions ask about your relationship with important people in your life---your close friends. Please tell me how true each statement is for you now.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Almost never Or never true	Not very often true	Sometime true	Often true	Almost always or always true
1. When we discuss things, my friends care about my point of view.				_____
2. I feel my friends are good friends.				_____
3. I feel angry with my friends.				_____
4. I trust my friends.				_____
5. My friends help me talk about my difficulties.				_____
6. It seems as if my friends are irritated with me for no reason.				_____

Family stressors:

I'm going to list some things that sometimes happen to people your age. For each event, tell me if it has happened to you during the last year. If it has happened during the last year, tell me how stressful it was for you when it occurred.

1.	2.	3.	4.		
No trouble	Bothersome	Stressful	Very stressful		
During the last year:					
1. Did one of your parents start or stop working?	No	1	2	3	4
2. Did your parents separate or get a divorce?	No	1	2	3	4

3. Did you argue more with your parents? No 1 2 3 4
4. Did your parents argue much more with each other? No 1 2 3 4
5. Did someone in your family have a problem with drug or alcohol use? No 1 2 3 4
6. Did someone important to you go to jail or prison? No 1 2 3 4

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE EXPOSURE

Now I will be asking about various kinds of violence that you may have experienced, seen or heard about in real life. These questions do not include things that you have seen or heard about only on TV, radio, in the news, or in the movies. For each question, I will be asking if the event happened to you, if you have seen it happen or if you know someone that it happened to.

It happened
to me
(A)

I saw it
happen
(B)

I Know someone
it happened to
(C)

None of
these
(D)

1. Chased by gang or individuals _____

2. Beaten up or mugged _____

3. Attacked or stabbed with a knife _____

4. Shot or shot at with a gun _____

5. Someone broke into or tried to force their way into the house or apartment.

_____a. I have had this happen to me when I was home.

_____b. I have had this happen to me when I was not home.

_____c. I have seen this happen to someone else's house or apartment.

_____d. I know someone who this happened to.

_____e. None of the above.

6. Someone carrying or holding a gun or a knife (not including police, military or security officers). _____

7. Witnessed gunfire. _____

8. Have seen a dead person somewhere in the community (not including wakes or funerals). _____

9. Witnessed someone being killed (either accidentally or intentionally).

_____a. I have seen someone being killed.

_____b. I know someone who was killed.

- _____c. I know someone who this happened to.
_____d. None of the above.

10. Drive -by shooting

- _____a. I was shot at.
_____b. I witnessed one.
_____c. I participated in one.
_____d. None of the above.

11. Have you been exposed to any other kind of violence that we haven't talked about?

Y N

What happened?

EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Next, I will be asking you some questions about school.

1	2	3	4	5
Less likely than almost all other kids	Less likely than many other kids	About as likely as other kids	More likely than many other kids	More likely than almost all other kids

1. Compared to other kids in your school, how likely is it that you will finish high school? _____

2. Compared to other kids in your school, how likely is it that you will go to college? _____

1	2.	3	4	5
Less important than to all others	Less important than to most others	About as important as to others	More important than to most others	More important than to all others

3. Compared to other kids in your school, how important is it to you that you do well in your schoolwork? _____

ANGER MANAGEMENT

I want you to read a list of things that some kids your age experience. Please tell me how often each of these things happens to you.

0	1	2	3
Never	Sometimes	Lots of times	Almost all of the time

1. Feeling lonely	0	1	2	3
2. Remembering things you don't want to remember	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble concentrating on things at home or at school	0	1	2	3
4. Wanting to break things	0	1	2	3
5. Wanting to hurt yourself	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling afraid	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling sad or unhappy	0	1	2	3
8. Can't stop thinking about something bad that happened	0	1	2	3
9. Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep	0	1	2	3
10. Wanting to yell at people	0	1	2	3
11. Wanting to kill yourself	0	1	2	3
12. Trying not to feel anything (bad feelings)	0	1	2	3
13. Worrying about things	0	1	2	3
14. Feeling unlike anybody else	0	1	2	3

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about times when you're angry:

1. In the last month, how many times have you hit, kicked , or slapped someone?_____

2. In the last month, how many times have you been disciplined for fighting, calling someone a name, arguing with a teacher, etc.?_____

3. In the last month, have you been suspended from school for any reason? Yes No

If yes, why?_____

4. You're walking to the store. Someone your age walks up to you and calls you a name.

What would you probably do if this happened to you? (Circle all that apply.)

Call him or her a name.

Ask him or her what's going on.

Walk away from him or her.

Tell him or her to stop.

Hit him or her.

5. You see your friend fighting with another kid your age. What would you probably do if this happened to you? (Circle all that apply.)

Cheer for your friend to win.

Find out why they are fighting.

Go away and let them fight it out.

Try to calm them down and stop the fight.

Join your friend in fighting the other kid.

SELF ESTEEM

I want you to read some statements and I'd like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

1	2	3	4
Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.			_____
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.			_____
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.			_____
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.			_____
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.			_____

Waterman, J. and Walker, E. (2000). *Helping At-Risk Students: A group counseling approach for Grades 6-9*. New York, The Guilford Press.

SECOND MENTEE SURVEY

1. My grade point average is _____.
2. I am satisfied with my grade point average ____yes____no.
3. I would like to improve my grades ____yes____no.
4. I need help in some of my studies ____yes____no.
5. I need help in the following studies: _____, _____,
_____, _____.
6. I would like for my mentor to help me in some of my studies
____yes____no.
7. I do not want my mentor to help me with my studies
____yes____no.
8. I would be happy to get help from any Educational Instructor
____yes____no.
9. I am satisfied with my self-esteem ____yes____no.
10. Sometimes, I feel low self-esteem ____yes____no.
11. I usually experience low self esteem when I get upset or when
someone makes me feel intimidated ____yes____no.
12. I never experience low self-esteem ____yes____no.
13. I would like to hear information about self-esteem ____yes____no.
14. I believe that great self esteem can help a person life experiences

____yes____no.

15. I don't believe that self esteem plays a significant role in one's

life____yes____no.

16. I don't feel that great self esteem matters that much____yes____no.

17. I want to always have great self-esteem ____yes____no.

18. I believe that peer pressure has a great impact upon the lives of

people ____yes____no.

19. I believe that association with the wrong people can definitely cause

bad behavior in people ____yes____no.

20. I admit that I am sometimes impacted by my peers____yes____no.

21. Sometimes I am influenced by my peers, but most of the time I am

not ____yes____no.

22. I am influenced by my peers sometimes in making wrong decisions

____yes____no.

23. I am never impacted by my peers in a negative way

____yes____no.

24. I never try to satisfy my peers ____yes____no.

25. I feel that I have peer pressure pretty much under control

_____yes_____no.

26. I would like to hear professional information about peer pressure and I believe that information on peer pressure can be of help to me in some way_____yes_____no.

27. I do try to conform to the behavior of my peers in some way

_____yes_____no.

28. I try to dress like my peers_____yes_____no.

29. I try to speak like my peers _____yes_____no.

30. I try to behave the way they do all of the time_____yes_____no.

31. I try to behave like my peers sometimes_____yes _____no.

32. I don't want my peers to think that I am different from them

_____yes _____no.

33. I want my peers to understand that I have my own views about

things _____yes_____no.

34. I believe that association with people who value high family morals, education and respect for people can positively impact people in a good way _____yes_____no.

35. I believe that negative peer pressure causes a lot of the problems with today's youth _____yes_____no.

36. I would like to hear information about sex and teen pregnancy

_____yes_____no.

37. I am aware of the need to understand correct behavior about sex and sexual diseases _____yes_____no.

38. I believe that being informed on the topic of sex thoroughly can help young people in making the right decisions in their lives

_____yes_____no.

39. I am aware that AIDS is a sexually transmitted disease that killing thousands of people in the world_____yes_____no.

40. I am aware that AIDS affects more African Americans in the Bronx than any other Borough in New York City_____yes_____no.

41. I believe that if there were more information provided to people, the percentage of patients with HIV/AIDS would decline _____yes_____no.

42. I want to hear all that I can on the topics of sex, teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases _____yes_____no.

43. I participate in many activities with my parents_____yes_____no.

44. I enjoy participating in activities with my parents or guardian _____yes_____no.

45. I feel that it is important to be involved in activities with my parents or guardian_____yes _____no.

46. I don't want to be involved in activities with my parents

____yes____no.

47. I believe that parental involvement helps build a strong relationship with their children____yes____no.

48. I think that most parents want to be involved in activities with their children____yes____no.

49. Would like for your parent, parents or guardian to attend some of your mentoring functions?____yes____no.

50. I need help in my decision about my career occupation
____yes ____no.

51. I need to spend more time in developing my skills____yes____no.

52. I believe that building skills is important in becoming successful in life____yes____no.

53. I believe that this mentoring program can help me in developing my skills____yes____no.

54. What is your greatest dream or goal at this time?

55. What is the greatest change you would like happen in your life right now?

54. Do you feel that this Mentoring program can help you to accomplish some of your dreams and goals? If yes explain how you feel that this can be accomplished.

55. Are you committed to make all of the efforts required by the guidelines for a mentee in the Butler Mentoring program?

____yes____no.

56. What would you like to see happen in your life at the end of the Program?

57. How do you feel about having a mentor who is a Christian?

FINAL SURVEY

Mentee_____

Date_____

How has the mentoring program changed your life?

The presenters and my mentor's relationship with me impacted me in the following ways:

gave me a better outlook about myself _____**Yes** _____**No**

gave me a better outlook about my career _____**Yes** _____**No**

gave me a better outlook about life in many ways _____**Yes** _____**No**

gave me a better outlook about how to cope with problems in life _____**Yes** _____**No**

helped me in deciding what career field I should go into _____**Yes** _____**No**

helped me to understand that I need to hear about the different fields for a career before
making a quick decision _____**Yes** _____**No**

helped me in understanding the impact of peer pressure on my life _____**Yes** _____**No**

I now know that I must be very careful in not allowing negative people to influence my
behavior and attitude _____**Yes** _____**No**

helped me in understanding the importance of keeping high self-esteem
_____**Yes** _____**No**

I now know that I need to have a positive attitude about myself in order to keep high
self-esteem _____**Yes** _____**No**

this program has helped me in feeling good about myself _____**Yes** _____**No**

this program has helped me by providing good information about what I should do about career planning and developing my skills. _____**Yes** _____**No**

the program has helped me by providing correct information about sex and sexually transmitted diseases that I have never had _____**Yes** _____**No**

I have developed skills in some areas as a result of the mentoring program
_____**Yes** _____**No**

I have improved in some of my school grades _____**Yes** _____**No**

I have not improved in any of my school grades _____**Yes** _____**No**

I have improved in some of my school grades by the help of the program tutor
_____**Yes** _____**No**

I have improved in some of my school grades by my own efforts _____**Yes** _____**No**

I would like this program to continue because:

I would say that my family has participated in my interest in the mentoring program even if they were not here _____**Yes** _____**No**

MENTEE INTEREST SURVEY

(To Be Completed by Youth)

Please complete all the following. This survey will help Butler Mentoring Program know more about you and your interests and help us find a good match for you.

What are the most convenient times for you to meet with your mentor?

Please check all that apply. From April 2008 to July 2008:

Weekdays: specify exact day and time_____

Lunch time_____ **After School** _____ **Evenings**_____

Weekends: specify exact day and time:_____

Other _____

From August to November 2008:

Weekdays: specify exact day and time_____

Lunch time_____ **After School** _____ **Evenings**_____

Weekends: specify exact day and time:_____

Other _____

What are some favorite things you like to do with other people?

What are your favorite subjects in school?_____

If you could learn about a job/career, what would it be?_____

What are your favorite subjects to read about?_____

What is one goal you have set for the future?_____

If you could learn something new, what would it be? _____

What person do you most admire and why? _____

Describe your ideal Saturday. _____

Please check all activities you are interested in:

Biking ____, **Hiking** ____, **Golf** ____, **Fishing** ____, **Camping** ____, **Boating** ____,

Swimming ____, **Animals** ____, **Science** ____, **Music** ____, **Gardening** _____

Eating ____, **Cooking** ____, **Sports** ____, **Parks** ____, **Board Games** _____

Library ____, **Yoga** ____, **Movies** ____, **Shopping** _____

List any other areas of special interest:

MENTEE'S EVALUATION OF MENTOR

1. I enjoyed being with my mentor. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

2. I always felt comfortable with my mentor since our first meeting.

_____ **Yes** _____ **No**

3. My mentor seemed to understand what the mentoring one-on-one relationship is about and explained it to me. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

4. My mentor wanted to know what my interests were. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

5. My mentor tried greatly to spend time with me. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

6. There were activity factors that caused me and my mentor not to be able to spend much time together. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

If yes, please explain.

7. The time that my mentor and I spent time together, was very productive. We:

8. During the time that my mentor and I spent together, we shared a lot of personal information with each other. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

9. I feel that my mentor is my friend. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

10. I feel that I can trust my mentor. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

11. I feel that I can tell my mentor a secret. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

12. I noticed a cultural difference with my mentor. _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

13. I feel that my mentor and I share at least one basic cultural thing and that is

14. If asked any one thing that I like about my mentor, it would be:

15. I would like to have the same mentor if the program continues.

_____ **Yes** _____ **No**

16. I would like to do the following things with my mentor:

17. I know that my mentor is a Christian because:

18. I feel safe with my mentor because:

19. My mentor has helped me to become a stronger female in this way:

20. I am glad I became a mentee because:

21. I am sorry I became a mentee because:

22. This was a great experience for me as a young girl because it:

23. I want to continue in the Butler Mentoring program in 2009. ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

MENTEE NAME: _____

DATE: _____

MENTEES EVALUATION OF DIRECTOR

(Cassandra White) & The Mentoring Program

1. The director of the mentoring program appeared to be knowledgeable of the program and enjoyed doing her work. _____ Yes _____ No

2. She appeared happy to be bringing this project to the girls at Butler Church.
_____ Yes _____ No If no, in what way was this seen?

If yes, in what way was this seen?

3. Did she try to make everyone comfortable about the mentoring project?

_____ Yes _____ No

4. Did she appear serious about the project? _____ Yes _____ No

5. Did it appear that she sincerely want the project to be successful?

_____ Yes _____ No

6. Did it appear that she really wanted the mentees to understand how the project could help us? _____ Yes _____ No

7. Did she go out and above in having us to enjoy all of the monthly sessions?

_____ Yes _____ No

8. Did she go out and above in having us to enjoy our fun filled day at the movie?

_____ Yes _____ No

9. Was she easy to approach? _____ Yes _____ No

10. Was she friendly and easy to talk to? _____ Yes _____ No

11. Did you feel good holding a conversation with her? _____Yes _____No

12. Did you ever see her appearing angry or upset? _____Yes _____No

13. Would you like to continue in the mentoring program another year?

_____Yes _____No

14. Did you accomplish your goal for the project? _____Yes _____No

15. If you did not, do you think that time was a factor? _____Yes _____No

16. Did you make any added goals for the program that you did not do in the beginning? _____Yes _____No

17. What would you like to see more in the mentoring program?

18. What are your feelings about Cassandra White as a Director of this program?

19. Did the girls get along well? _____Yes _____No

20. Of everything that happened in the program, what did you enjoy most?

21. What do you want out of this program more than anything?

22. What activities would like to see added to the mentoring program?

Date_____

MENTORS REPORT ON VISIT WITH MENTEE

MENTOR _____ **MENTEE** _____

On _____, I met with my mentee _____. We met at _____, at _____ AM/ PM. My mentee and I had a fun-filled meeting where we:

_____.
(describe the activity)

After the activity we had the following discussion and decided on a date for our next meeting.

My mentee appeared _____ about our meeting. The first thing that we had discussions about was:

_____.

My mentee wanted to talk about:

_____.

_____.

We (did or did not) _____ discuss this topic at that time.

We decided to work on the following project and activities in the future:

_____.

_____.

We discussed things that my mentee thought that she could get out of this mentoring project and she stated:

We discussed ways of pursuing her goals in an appropriate manner and time period.

____ Yes ____ No

I gave the following suggestions on how I could help her in accomplishing these goals:

I would classify our meeting as: Very Good Good Fair Bad (circle one).

After the meeting with my mentee and our discussion, I would say that I am positively impacting my mentee.

Definitely _____ Making Progress _____ Not At All _____.

If there is anything that I am concerned about, it is:

The next thing that I am going to implement in order to enhance our mentor/mentee relationship is:

PRESENTER EVALUATION FORM

(To be completed by the Mentor)

1. I enjoyed the presentation. Yes ____ No____.
2. She addressed many of the topics that I was interested in. Yes ____ No____.
3. She gave a lot of information about topics that I was interested in. Yes ____ No____.
4. Her presentation gave me much better insights about issues that I am interested in.
Yes ____ No____.
5. Her life experiences gave me a new outlook about life. Yes ____ No____.
6. Her expressions about her life make me think more about circumstances in my own life
than I did before. Yes ____ No____.
7. Her presentation was professional, cheerful and exciting. Yes ____ No____.
8. Her presentation was very educational. Yes ____ No____.
9. She made me think about my career outlook in a different way. Yes ____ No____.
10. She gave great insights about building skills for career and occupational goals.
Yes ____ No____.
11. She gave me more hope for a great, promising future. Yes ____ No____.
12. After listening to her entire presentation I was most impressed with

13. She appeared very knowledgeable about her career/occupation. Yes ____ No____.
14. She appeared to enjoy speaking to us. Yes ____ No____.

15. She provided a wealth of knowledge about preparing for an interview.

Yes ____ No ____.

16. Her presentation gives young people and older adults a clear and concise understanding of important things people should know for seeking a job.

Yes ____ No ____.

17. Would you like to have her return to speak to you about another topic?

Yes ____ No ____.

18. If yes, what topic are you interested in? _____.

19. The information she provided and her delivery were both very strong.

Yes ____ No ____.

20. She had a great impact upon every one present. Yes ____ No ____.

APPENDIX B: Mentor Biographies

ATTORNEY JEVET JOHNSON

Attorney Johnson was born and raised in New York City during the 80's and 90's to a middle class family in East Harlem. After attending Central Park East and Academy for Environmental Science, she attended Manhattan Center for Science and Math in East Harlem. Upon graduating from MCSM, she attended Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, GA. She graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelors Degree in Psychology in 1996. It was at CAU that she started working with the community. Her interest has always been working with children, so she did a lot of tutoring and mentoring during her time at CAU.

In 1996, she moved back to NYC and started working at The Practicing Law Institute. It's a British company that publishes books and seminars for attorneys. During her 5 years there, she started in the customer service department and was promoted to Program Assistant. Being a Program Assistant gave her the first real dose of law. She assisted attorneys in organizing educational programs for lawyers. This was also the time that she applied to law school. She wanted to be a Prosecutor after observing what drugs did to New York City and close friends in the 80's, the beginning of the crack epidemic.

In 1997 while working full time at PLI, she started night school as a part-time law student at Touro Law School in Huntington, NY. For the next 4 years, she worked full time during the day in Manhattan and attended law school at night in Long Island. In 2001 she graduated from Touro with a Juris Doctor degree and in the fall became a

Prosecutor in the Bronx District Attorney's Office.

She has been a Prosecutor for 7 years. She started in the Criminal Court bureau, where they dealt with misdemeanor cases. After 2 years in Criminal Court, she worked in the Grand Jury bureau for 9 months. In Grand Jury, it was her job to present serious felonies, such as attempted murders, to the grand jury. After 9 months, she was promoted to the Narcotics bureau. She has been in Narcotics since October of 2004. Her job now is to prosecute felony and misdemeanor Narcotic cases. She primarily deals with cases involving the possession and sale of different Narcotics.

In addition to the work, she also takes part in the YTAP program. YTAP is the Youth Trial Advocacy Program. In this program, high school students learn how to be lawyers and try a case. At the end of the school year, the kids actually conduct a trial before a Supreme Court Justice. This program is great because it teaches kids to deal with stage fright and it builds their confidence. Outside of the office, she works with New York Cares. New York Cares is an organization that works towards helping the People of New York City. Their work ranges from helping the homeless to projects that beautify the city.

In her spare time she loves spending time with friends and family. She also loves to read. She didn't appreciate reading until after she graduated from school, but it is now her favorite thing to do when she has some down time.

SANDRA WHITE,M.D.

Sandra White, M.D., is the Medical Director at WellPoint Inc. She is highly experienced at healthcare strategy, performance improvement and network management.

She has demonstrated leadership skills in organizational change and process

improvement that translates strategic concepts into concrete actionable tactics in order to facilitate change. An experienced team facilitator and change manager to drive customer focused processes, and performance improvement in clinical and business environments. She is a healthcare executive with population management experience, as well. She has comprehensive expertise in clinical practice, specialty pharmacy, patient safety, utilization management, health and condition management, and analytics and program development. Proven ability to create, lead and execute innovative strategies, influence physicians, build effective teams and integrate technology into clinical and business settings. She is a motivated self-directed leader, comfortable with dealing with change and ambiguity and exhibits pragmatic analytical problem solving skills.

Dr. White is responsible for Responsible for Medicaid business' southeast region, (VA, West VA, and SC), implementing clinical programs, and developing and executing market specific initiatives; targeted medical management through UM, CM, and care management; developing and maintaining relationships with internal and external stakeholders and representing WellPoint with external stakeholders; broad collaboration among multiple parties including government, integrated delivery health systems, physicians and community leaders to promote policy and initiatives to improve the state's population health. She leads development of medical management and services provisions for new products; leads management of specialty pharmacy for patient safety through cost effective sites of care, step edits, specialty pharmacy network and therapeutic management. She provides expertise and leadership on a broad range of health care provisions including population management, trend management, public and health policy, cultural competency and disparities reduction.

Dr. White received her B.S. degree from City College University of New York and M.D. degree from Mount Sinai School of Medicine. Her M.B.A. was awarded from Kennesaw State University. She is a Diplomat of the American Board of Internal Medicine and Rheumatology and a Diplomat of the American Board of Quality Assurance and Utilization, reviewing physicians with certifications in managed care and case management.

HON. DARCEL D. CLARK

Justice Darcel D. Clark is a lifelong resident of New York City. In 1983, she received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Boston College. Justice Clark was the first in her family to go to college. She also was the first recipient of the Boston College Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. In 1997, Justice Clark was elevated to Deputy Chief of the Criminal Court Bureau.

In April 1999, former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani appointed her Judge of the Criminal Court of the City of New York. On Election Day 2005, the citizens of Bronx County elected Justice Clark to the Supreme Court of the State of New York for a 14-year Term. She currently presides over criminal trials and hearings.

Justice Clark is a member of the Bronx County Bar Association, the National Association Of Judges and the Association of the Bar of the City of New York where she serves on the Committee to Promote Judicial Service. Justice Clark coordinated the first “Color of Justice” Program in Bronx County. The event was designed to encourage minority female high school students to pursue the law and the judiciary as career goals. Justice Clark has also been fully presented to the Black Bar Association of Bronx County where she currently serves as a Director of the Board, and has served two elected terms

as President, three terms as Treasurer, and one year as Chair of the Board. Under her administration, the Neighborhood Law Program was started which provides free law – related classes for Bronx Community residents.

AYRIS EVANS GRANBY

Ayris received her formal education in the Bronx, New York in the New York City Public School System. With her mind and heart set to become a nurse, Ayris was accepted and graduated from the prestigious Harlem Hospital School of Nursing, thus beginning her career of service in Professional Nursing.

It was not surprising to know that this exceptional lady, while working earned her Bachelor of Science and Masters of Science Degrees, while married to Samuel Granby, Jr., and raising two children, Ayris and Lamont.

Ayris was an Instructor at the Hospital for Joint Disease; an Instructor Chairman for the Central School for Practical Nursing, where she was instrumental in developing and implementing the curriculum to upgrade Nurses Aides to Practical Nursing. She has held numerous Administrative positions during her tenure at Harlem Hospital Center, the Assistant Director School of Nursing, Hospital Director of Nursing, and finally Associate Executive Director for Hospital Administration. Ayris was responsible for the development and implementation of numerous services at Harlem Hospital- Unit Management, Recreation, New Cardiac Catherization Lab, and the credentialing through the Medical Board of all professional Nurses working in expanded roles.

Ayris has been a preceptor for field placement for undergraduate students from several colleges and universities. She has received numerous ‘Awards and Certificates of Appreciation from the Division of Health Care Administration and Planning, Meharry

Medical College, Fisk University, Herbert H. Lehman College, Rutgers University and Livingstone College.

When Ayris left Harlem Hospital, she was appointed Nursing Consultant for the New York State Department of Health. After five years of service, she returned to the private sector as Director of Nursing for a Nursing Home. Ayris has been and is the “Right Hand” to her husband, and has assisted him in the construction and expansion of Granby’s Funeral Service, Inc.

Ayris interests and goals to improve the quality of life other community, motivated her to develop and implement a Scholarship Program for Granby’s Funeral Service, Inc. for young people entering college or schools for higher education. Ayris believes that Quality Education and financial assistance must be available to assist our young people to prepare for tomorrow’s challenges and needs. The Catholic Archdiocese of New York awarded Ayris the Prestigious “Pierre Touissant Medallion” for Community Service.

Ayris has been active with many community organizations, such as the Friends of the United Negro College Fund Choir. This organization raised funds so that the choirs could travel throughout the United States in support of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). She is active with the Board of Directors of the Crawford Community Day Care Center, a Workshop Leader and Instructor for the Community Service Society, where she advised community groups of their Rights and Responsibilities in participating in the new community based Medicaid Health Programs.

ATTORNEY COLETTE STANFORD

Colette H.Stanford is Vice President and Counsel of Aeropostale, Inc., the

specialty retailer of casual apparel and accessories for young women and men with over 980 stores in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. At Aeropostale, Ms. Stanford handles a variety of legal matters including intellectual property, contracts and employment. Prior to Aeropostale, Ms. Stanford was the Vice President and Counsel of Tommy Hilfiger USA, Inc., which properties include both the world famous lifestyle brand Tommy Hilfiger and Karl Lagerfeld, a high-end label. At Tommy, Ms. Stanford supported a number of business units in the company. Ms. Stanford began her legal career at Robinson Brog Leinwand Greene Genovese and G; Luck, P.C. a firm in Midtown New York, where she represented clients engaged in a variety of industries including apparel, entertainment, restaurants, publishing and manufacturing on corporate and commercial matters. Ms. Stanford is a member of New York State Bar Association of Corporate Counsel and the American Bar Association.

Ms. Stanford received her law degree from Emory University School of Law in Atlanta, Georgia in 1999. At Emory, Ms. Stanford was actively involved in the National Frederick Douglas Moot Court Competition as both a participant and coach, and the Black Law Students Association. She completed her undergraduate work at Vassar College in 1993 with a B A in Urban Studies. She was actively involved in student government, serving as Treasurer for the Class of 93, the Black Students Association and her dorm. Ms. Stanford is also a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. After graduating she worked at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York as a program coordinator for their legal clinics and a Wold Haldenstein Adler Freeman and Herz LLP as a legal assistant for their securities litigation practice.

Ms. Stanford was born in the Bronx, New York and attended Regents School, Our

Savior Lutheran and LaGuardia High School of Performing Arts (majoring in music). Her parents, Pearl and Calvin Stanford, originally from Jamaica and Panama, were married at Butler United Methodist Church, where her mother remains an active member including being a founding member of the Nurses Unit. Ms. Stanford was baptized at Butler and was a member of the WEP Johnson Choir and the Junior Usher Board. More recently, Ms. Stanford has served as a member of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee and is currently the Chairperson of the Building Fund, which has embarked on a campaign to renovate and expand Butler's existing facility. Ms. Stanford credits her parents love and support, the support and encouragement she received from family, friends and her community, and her faith for the success she achieved thus far.

DR.JENNIFER MISICK

Dr. Jennifer Engram Missick has been an educator and educational consultant for over twenty years. Her experiences in education have extended from elementary school through higher education.

Dr. Missick began her journey in education as a fourth grade teacher. She has been an elementary and high school counselor, a mentor for college level students, a gymnastics teacher for Special Olympics, a swimming teacher and a tutor in English. Currently Dr. Missick is serving as Chairperson of the Student Development department at Bronx Community College of the City University of New York. She is an Associate Professor with the responsibility of supervising the Counseling faculty. Additionally, she serves on multiple college and university wide committees. Effective September 2007, she will become the Associate Dean for Counseling, Student Support Services and Personnel and Budget in the Department of Student Development. She has distinguished

herself as a grants writer and consultant by receiving more than \$3 million dollars in funding. Her expertise in teaching and grant writing have caused her to become sought after as a grants trainer at research universities across the country and a grants reader for Jack and Jill of America, Inc. She has made presentations at national conferences on the retention of minority students in colleges and universities and learner centered teaching.

Dr. Missick is a native of Tallahassee, Florida, where she received her Bachelor of Science degree from Florida A&M University. She attended Florida State University where she received her Master of Science degree in Counseling Education. In 1992, she was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Higher Education from Florida State University.

Dr. Missick has worked beside her husband, the Rev. Dr. Glen Missick, in ministry for twenty-three years. She has assisted him in writing grants for youth programs, served as an advisor for teenagers, taught as a substitute lecturer at Auburn Seminary, designed and implemented a Friday night ministry for young people in Harlem, created an intergenerational program, developed a mentoring program and taught the “Journey Series Bible Study” Program. In addition, she has received training in church growth and health and has assisted her husband in conducting training for church boards and pastors.

Dr. Missick is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Pi Gamma Mu National Honor Society and the American Association of Community Colleges.

CASSANDRA WHITE, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Cassandra White is the Lay leader and Lay Speaker of Butler Memorial United Methodist Church in the Bronx New York. She has a Master of Divinity Degree from

New York Theological Seminary and is a Doctoral Candidate in Ministry at New York Theological Seminary in New York City. She loves working and helping young people in any capacity in enhancing their lives. She ultimately aspires to become an Elder in the Methodist Denomination.

She is currently retired from New York City Office of Revenue and Investigation where she was a Deputy Director over a Fraud Investigation Division. While employed, she supervised and provided training to a staff of 100 Investigators. Her training was focused on training in the detection of fraud with public assistance, Medicaid and food stamp. She referred flagrant, egregious cases to the District Attorney Office for prosecution.

She received the following special awards:

2006 Humanitarian Award, Claflin University Alumni Chapter (NYC)

2005 Service Award, Butler Memorial United Methodist Church

1999 The Federal Government Hammer Award

1993 Outstanding Service and Contribution to Human Resources Administration STEP ACE Program

1990 Human Resources Administration Woman of the Year Award

1986 Director's Citation, Bureau of Client Fraud Investigation

1985 Supervisor Unit of the Year Award

1984 Investigator of the Year Award

1984 Commendation Award for Supervisor Performance

Her education comprises:

1. Clinical Pastoral Education at Riverside Church Riverside Drive, New York City,

- 2006.
2. Masters of Divinity Degree from New York Theological Seminary, 2005.
 3. Earned credits from New York Institute of Technology in Public Relations 1986-1987.
 4. Bachelor of Science in Biology, Claflin University, Orangeburg, South Carolina, 1970.

Mrs. White is married to Ned White, Jr., they have three adult children and three grandchildren. She credits her accomplishments to the Almighty God, and her mother, Viola J. Middleton, husband, children and friends who believed in her.

WENDY HOLNESS (SECOND PROGRAM DIRECTOR)

Wendy Holness is a member of Butler United Methodist Church. She has been the recipient of nurturing spiritually and emotionally by the membership and programs. Since the age of 6 she has participated in youth activities including the Youth Choirs, Usher Board, Acolytes YOF, and MYF. She is presently the Youth Coordinator of Butler and interested in providing spiritual and social support to church and unchurched youth. She is very active in the life of the church, participating in leadership positions on several ministries. She is a licensed Social Worker and an active community member. She gives all honor to God who strengthens her and purposes her to be excellent in all endeavors and to share His love with others.

APPENDIX C: Mentee Data

Data Analysis of Findings

The names of the mentees have been changed to conceal the true identity of the mentees:

Fran:

80 % GPA. Parents separated- lives with dad. Motivated toward college. Affected by peer pressure. Indicates self-esteem could be improved, but expressed some ambivalence often answering in a contradicting way.

Strong ethnic identity, peer support needs improvement. Communication with parents poor, moved 3-5 times. Moderate self esteem, affected negatively by divorce of parents.

Direct exposure to shooting, other violence. High educational aspirations but performance has decreased, high distractibility. Preoccupied, stress related to family issues, acting out violently in school and home.

Impacted positively by movie.

No parent survey, no secondary survey, no final survey.

Joyce:

Missing most surveys- only final survey reviewed.

Karen:

GPA missing. Parents married, strong ethnic identity. One of the few girls who clearly understood this question. Strong peer support, some help with parent communication indicated. Moderate violence exposure, association to gangs. High educational aspirations, emotionally adjusted, good frustration tolerance. High comfort level with

mentor. Difficulty coordinating schedules for meetings. Parent expressed satisfaction with program and indicated daughter has increased motivation to succeed, to replicate or surpass achievement of women she met.

Pam:

GPA: 69%. GPA noted as improved but grade not indicated. Aspires to be a singer.

Deceased parent, incarcerated parent. No direct exposure to violence but father murdered. No address permanency indicated. Ethnic pride not reported on. Peer support adequate. Stress related to parents very high and has impacted on school, educational aspirations average. Good emotional control reported, esteem strong, overall positive feedback about program. No parent response.

Joyce:

GPA 68%. Improvement indicated but grade not specified. Relations need improvement because she is often angry with friends, mistrustful of friends. Parent relationships strained, adopted. Poor communication, natural parent incarcerated in past. Direct exposure to violence, gangs. Good educational aspiration, no acting out or violent behavior in last month. Great esteem reported. Survey incomplete in some areas. Witnessed violence/ bullying while participating in program. Survey reflected more expression of anger after 3 months in program. Incidents of acting out & fighting reported. Either more honest disclosure or change over time.

Positive feedback about program over all, attributed improvement in attitude to interaction with mentor & workshops. Did not feel comfortable enough with mentor for full disclosure.

Mary:

GPA not indicated. Moved a lot, parents separated and she resides with mom. Did not specify ethnic group but has good concept, great peer attachment reported. arguing with mom reported stressful to youth. Exposure to violence, gang activity and death of friend. High educational aspiration, emotionally adjusted. Self-esteem high: youth misread/ erroneously completed first 2 questions. Relocated out of country: no other materials completed.

Cassandra:

GPA not indicated. Parents married, stable living arrangements. Educational aspiration moderate. Emotional adjustment needed, high acting out reported. No exposure/ association to gangs reported. Enjoyed outings, dance exposure. Contributes increased confidence to mentoring. Good communication/ consistent contact with mentor reported. Parent reports increased confidence/ more interest in planning for future. Better able to express herself.

Etta:

GPA 82%. Single parent, stable living arrangements. Positive self-concept, ethnic pride high but ethnicity not indicated. High peer relations, support. Some assistance needed with communication skills with parents not addressed in workshop. No exposure to violence/ gang association. High educational aspiration. Emotional instability, frustration and acting out violently toward others indicated 7 x in 1month. Problem solving skills needed. Increased ability to express herself, confidence indicated. Parent reports increased ability to express herself. Improvement in math. More confident about career path due to info presented. Improved focus/ ability to organize and express

thoughts/ increased consequential thinking.

Sandra:

GPA 3.0. One parent deceased/ resides w/ single parent. Frequent relocation 3-5x. Some dissatisfaction with self not specified, but overall self-concept is good. Ethnic pride indicated but ethnicity not indicated, confused by question. Indicated good peer relations/ attachment, parent's financial need/ loss of employment a stressor because of arguing. Strained communication but improvement indicated during program. No exposure to violence initially reported but secondary exposure reported on second survey. Moderate educational aspiration but this decreased during course of mentoring program. Some isolation and emotional needs indicated related to death of parent, improvement noted during course of mentoring program. Often afraid/ sad; preoccupation with bad event. Acting out behavior indicated 5x, self-esteem/worth average. Promoted to next grade. Parent reports increase in confidence and increased communication. More discussion about her life with mom.

Barbara:

GPA 88% Improved over course of program. Father deceased, lives with single parent. Housing stable. Strong ethnic pride reported but ethnicity not indicated. Confusion about question. Reports very good peer attachment/ support. No family stressors indicated, communication issues not indicated. Second hand exposure to violence/ associated w/ someone who was assaulted by gang. High educational aspiration/ emotionally adjusted. No violent acting out behavior reported/ high self esteem reported. Received assistance identifying career path. Program increased awareness of career options/ improved listening skills.

Yvonne:

Initial survey missing although she completed it. Improved self esteem, optimism about life indicated in overall.

Ann:

GPA not indicated. Lives with single parent, housing stable. Self-concept good. Ethnic pride not answered/ confusion about this section. Peer attachment/ relations high, but separation of parents a stressor for youth. Communication with parent good but could be improved. Low exposure to violence- aware of person who was beaten/ mugged. Educational aspirations high/ emotional stressors low. Low incidents of acting out/ behavioral issues. Self esteem high/ conflict management good. Overall feedback positive but growth in any one area not clear based on surveys.

Jessica:

GPA not indicated but improvement over course of program indicated. Parents married. Ethnicity indicated as black/ clarification of race and ethnicity needed/ ethnic pride high. Peer attachment/relations high. Good conflict management indicated/ reported very high self-esteem. Moderate second-hand exposure to violence. High educational aspiration. Moderate to high emotional stress indicated- bad memories, wanting to break things, feeling afraid, sad, wanting to yell, worry, and isolation indicated. Little to no incidents of acting out behavior. Schedule and other obligations prevented youth from participating. Found program motivational, increased desire to succeed and then to give back to others. Parent reports increased knowledge/ exposure to career options. Fostered connection to church and desire to succeed and give back to others- modeling. Felt age

difference of mentor was too great.

Delores:

GPA 65%. Received tutoring through mentoring program and student was promoted.

Single parent, strong ethnic pride indicated but confusion about question of ethnicity

obvious. Peer attachment/ relation is good. No exposure to violence. High educational

aspiration indicated but desires ongoing educational support. Indicates she is well-

adjusted emotionally/ no acting out behavior requiring disciplinary measure reported.

Self-esteem is reported as very high. No parent survey (refused)/ missing many forms.

Dina:

GPA 82%. Initial survey and all other forms missing.

Shirley: GPA 65%. Promoted to next grade and reports improvement in grades. Loss of

both parents, lives with grandparent. One parent incarcerated. Ethnic pride indicated but

ethnicity not indicated. Peer relations/ attachments need improvement. Direct exposure

to violence/ gangs indicated as well as second-hand exposure. Moderate educational

aspiration indicated. Moderate emotional stress indicated, no acting out/ violent behavior

indicated. Some conflict resolution skills indicated, self esteem good but could be

improved.

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